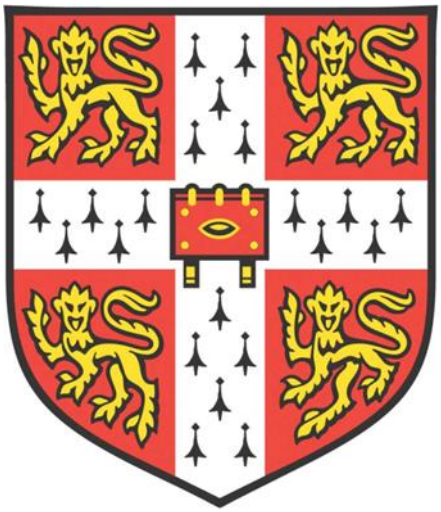
# Julius Caesar, Fortune, and Latin Historiography in Twelfth-Century England



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This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

# DECLARATION

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee (History).

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# ABSTRACT

## 'Julius Caesar, Fortune, and Latin Historiography in Twelfth-Century England'

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This thesis suggests that four twelfth-century English historians – Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Robert of Lewes (as probable author of the *Gesta Stephani*) – believed that they had identified a schema that could determine who and what was culpable for engendering events that had been unexpected or whose outcomes defied expectation. These historians were amongst the first writers of the period to attribute such events to fortune, *fortuna*. After discussing what they meant by *fortuna*, the thesis turns to consider what all of this meant for their understanding of the maximal limits of lapsarian human agency, as articulated by their characterisation of selected kings and magnates as 'New Caesars'.

Chapter One asks why these historians started using the term *fortuna* and hypothesises as to why certain of their peers did not do so. It demonstrates the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* patterning that links sin and specific reverses of fortune in the historical narratives and contextualises this according to the historians' own words on the subject of the higher purposes of their endeavour. It contends that attribution to *fortuna* was neither a concession of causal intractability, nor an empty rhetorical sleight of hand, nor any inducement to providential scepticism. Rather, that it served to affirm that the vicissitudes that afflicted human affairs had their proper causes in sin, and that a historian's forensic hindsight could identify which specific sins had engendered Providence's disposition of specific events or outcomes that otherwise appeared unjust. As patterns emerged, these could be used to blame transgressors but also to interrogate ethical standards and determine where supposedly virtuous human conventions had wandered from God's infallible justice. The historians' interest in understanding fortune thus yielded ethical as well as theological insights.

These same historians took an especial interest in Julius Caesar. Chapter Two first examines Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth's contrasting assessments of Caesar's legacy as articulated by their substantially original narratives of Caesar's invasions of Britain. It argues that these narratives were chiefly intended as tacit commentary on the Norman Conquest and the means by which unity ought to be pursued. Complementarily, it examines how and why

the historians who wrote in the immediate wake of the conquest characterised William, a leader who they suggested was guiding his people to salvation, as a 'New Caesar'.

Chapter Three argues that while it had been easy for eleventh-century historians to account for the Norman Conquest in the simplistic terms of providential reward for virtue, by contrast the events of William II Rufus' reign spurred interest in whether analysis of events whose rationale seemed unclear might unveil aspects of the working of the Divine Mind – that is, of truth - that humanity had yet failed to uncover. It is also concerned with the fame that King William II Rufus seems to have attracted for the excellent fortune that attended to him, and which the historians implied had exceeded even Caesar's famed *fortuna Caesaris*.

In suggesting that at least one of their rulers had experienced the perfect favour of fortune for an extended period of time, the historians had defined a state of agency that could be either terrifying, destructive, and Satanic - a scenario explored in Chapter Four - or unifying, restorative, and Godly - a scenario explored in Chapter Five. Chapter Four questions whether any aspects of the Satanic Caesar, a type familiar in Early Modern literature, might be evident in the four historians' works, and if so how and why.

Chapter Five asks whether what can be reconstructed of the historians' thinking might have supported the view that humanity could, by grace of God, lift itself out of the lapsarian state. To this end, it considers evidence that shows that at least one of the historians believed that a New Caesar's agency could restore England to a paradisal state that she would never again lapse from. Later in his life, he wrote to say that he had lived to see it happen. This extraordinary claim is shown to accord with his atypical eschatological views.

Synthesising the evidence of the texts with a contextual reconstruction of the historians' intellectual milieux, especial attention is paid to the theories and ideas that lay behind the historians' rhetoric.

*To Willie the orangutan*

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# CONTENTS

# ABBREVIATED REFERENCES

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| *DCD* | Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, trans. H. Bettenson, *City of God*, rev. edn. (London, 2003). |
| *DCP* | Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, ed. and trans. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester, *Consolation of Philosophy* (Cambridge MA, 1973). |
| *GR* | William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom, *The History of the English Kings*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1998-9), vol. 1. |
| *GG* | William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi,* ed. and trans. R. H. C. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford 1998). |
| *GP* | William of Malmesbury, *Gesta pontificum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, *The History of the English Bishops*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2007), vol. 1. |
| *GS* | Robert of Lewes, *Gesta Stephani regis Anglorum et ducis Normannorum*, ed. and trans. K. R. Potter, *Gesta Stephani* (Oxford, 1976). |

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| *HA* | Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. and trans. D. Greenway (Oxford, 1996). |
| *HE* | Orderic Vitalis, *Historia ecclesiastica*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969-80). |
| *HN* | William of Malmesbury, *Historia nouella*, ed. and trans. K. R. Potter, rev. E. King (Oxford, 1998). |
| *HRB* | Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia regum Britanniae*, ed. M. D. Reeve, trans. N. Wright, *The History of the Kings of Britain* (Woodbridge, 2007). |

# INTRODUCTION

When thinking and writing about the past it is honest and therefore necessary to define what it is that we wish to derive from our efforts. My aspiration is to demonstrate that at least some of the historians of twelfth-century England and Normandy were engaged in a project to eliminate contingency – that they called fortune's reverses - from lived experience. I contend that their purpose in doing so was to remove impediment to their own and their communities' cultivation of virtue and, thereby, attainment of unity under and with God. Some of the historians countenanced that the ultimate end of unity with God was attainable *in this life* – that there would be a temporal restoration to a paradisal state. This was predicated on the anticipated emergence of a leader whose agency would outmatch the received archetype of the momentous secular leader - Julius Caesar. Building on my earlier work, I explain that modern historians' failure to resolve the historians' causal model, and in particular the utility of fortune within it, has allowed the extent of these ambitions to go unrecognised. The consequences of these insights for our understanding of the historical endeavour and of twelfth-century thought more broadly are many. Through them, the nexus of the historians' preoccupations reveals itself.

*Time and place*

This is a study of ideas, not events, but ideas do not form in a vacuum – they are subject to cause and effect like everything else in this world. Experience of happenings and circumstance are memorised, whether consciously or otherwise, and these memories influence the synthesis of new ideas. Ideas are, to some degree, a product of their time and place. Let us consider our subjects' temporal and spatial contexts.

The ideological climate of twelfth-century England was weighed by the burden of a storied historical and mythic past that stretched to antiquity. Prevailing understanding held that recorded British history began with the invasions of Julius Caesar in 55 and 54 BC.[1] The revered historical authority of earlier years, the Venerable Bede, noted that still-earlier inhabitants of the isle, the Britons and Picts, had arrived, respectively, from Brittany and 'Scythia' -which he mistook for Scandinavia.[2] Shortly after Bede, other writers penned elaborate tales, influential in period but now recognised as myths, to fill the negative space that he and others had left in the pre-Roman historical record.[3] With respect to the ideological discourse of the twelfth century, the most influential of these myths told of Britain's founding by the apocryphal Roman consul Brutus, who was purported to have been descended from the Trojan hero of Virgilian fame, Aeneas.[4] The narrative of Britain's ancient history was hotly contested during the twelfth century, and the ideological debate that spurred writers' pens will be addressed in depth in Chapter Two.

England's early medieval history was mostly a tale of invasion, associated migrations, and political jostling, but it was also a time of unification. The sixth century's Christian missions to England helped to kickstart what proved to be a powerful unifying impulse. Despite various short-lived revivals of paganism, the majority of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were at least nominally Christian by 655. All were Christian by the end of the seventh century. Although sharing a common religion, Anglo-Saxon politics remained divided and fractious over the course of the following centuries, during which kingdoms often took up arms against one another. The incipient English nation finally attained political unification in 927, when Æthelstan became King of the English. Twelfth-century commentators sometimes pointed instead to Ecgberht and the Kingdom of Wessex's assumption of primacy over Mercia and Northumbria in 829 as the decisive moment in England's political unification.[5] At any rate, through much of this period England suffered from the incursions of the Danes, whose ambitions turned to conquest in 865. The resolve of Æthelred

[1] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), 20-21.
[2] Bede, *Historia*, 16-19.
[3] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, ed. and trans. J. Morris, *British History and the Welsh Annals* (London and Chichester, 1980).
[4] *HRB*, 6-31.
[5] For instance, see: *HA*, 264-5.

and Alfred contained the invaders to the swathe of the east and north of the country, an area that became known as the Danelaw. Although the Danelaw was reabsorbed by the time of Æthelstan's reign, England was at last brought under the control of a Danish king when it was conquered in 1013 by Sweyn Forkbeard. The predominating impression that the major events of this period left on the twelfth century, and by extension the influence that they exerted on twelfth-century ideological discourse, have been the subject of extensive scholarly attention, some very recent.[6]

It was the events of the more recent past that did the most to prompt twelfth century reflections on Britain's ancient and earlier medieval history. The Norman Conquest of 1066 and the events that it precipitated were of paramount significance for England's subsequent cultural development. Although William the Conqueror (r. 1066-1087) had constructed castles from the outset of the Norman arrival, he had shown relatively little initial interest in stamping a Norman mark on English culture, a course he reversed in the face of ongoing English resistance.[7] With the approval of the pope he set about replacing the English episcopate and abbots with clergy from the continent.[8] He also sallied north to subdue northern rebellions in a series of apparently brutal campaigns that have become known as the Harrying of the North.[9] For years after the conquest, rebellions and invasions threatened William's reign on both sides of the English Channel, and after a familial dispute his own eldest son Robert Curthose turned against him. His deathbed decision to partition the Anglo-Norman kingdom between his two eldest sons resulted in two decades of internecine strife as they and their younger brother Henry jostled for supremacy. William was persuaded to leave the duchy of Normandy to the rebellious Robert, but he reserved the crown of England for his next eldest son, William Rufus. To the younger son, Henry, he left a fortune to carve his own destiny.

King William II Rufus only reigned from 1087 until he was killed in a suspicious hunting accident in 1100, but it is difficult to overstate the influence that his reign seems to have had on ideological discourse in England during the first half of the twelfth century.[10] Rufus was driven and assured, qualities that led him to clash with the church and, in particular, Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury. He did not hold back in criticising what he perceived were absurdities in the church's ideological positions, and at all times seems to have done his best to maintain royal prerogatives.[11] While Rufus is denigrated in the historical record for his rough handling of church interests and his criticism of church dogma, the ideas that he mouthed drew sincere and substantive responses. Chapter Three argues that these have been only partially understood. Further, that the insinuations borne by the common contemporary analogy drawn between Rufus and Julius Caesar's success

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[6] Especially and throughout: E. A. Winkler, *Royal Responsibility in Anglo-Norman Historical Writing* (Oxford, 2017).
[7] See: D. Bates, *William the Conqueror*, 2004 edn. (Stroud, 2004), 181 ff.
[8] Bates, *William the Conqueror*, 210-12.
[9] See: M. Hagger, *William: King and Conqueror* (London and New York, 2012), 85-110.
[10] See: C. Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt in medieval England', in S. Mukherji, Y. Batsaki and J.-M. Schramm (eds.), *Fictions of Knowledge: Fact, Evidence, Doubt* (Houndmills, 2012), 40-60.
[11] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 43-45.

have been overlooked entirely. What annoyed and intrigued ecclesial commentators was that for all of the king's ungodliness, God had nonetheless afforded him the enjoyment of constant successes for many years.[12] Arguably, Rufus' ideological provocations helped prompt the formulation of the ideas at the centre of this study, and reflection on the vexing potential of his career catalysed their development in line with commentators' broader ambitions.

The partition of the Anglo-Norman domain after William the Conqueror's death proved to be short-lived. In 1096 Robert Curthose pledged Normandy to Rufus in exchange for funds to assist his participation in the First Crusade. By the time Robert returned from the Holy Land, having refused to assume the crown of Jerusalem, Rufus was dead and their younger brother Henry (r. 1100-1135) had persuaded the magnates of England to support his coronation as king in August 1100. Robert still commanded the loyalty of the Norman lords, and invaded England in 1101, but Henry repelled the invasion, turned the tables, and entered Normandy in 1103. The conflict between William the Conqueror's surviving sons came to a decisive end with Henry's victory over Robert and the Norman rebels at Tinchebray in 1006. Contemporary narratives joyfully celebrate the reunification of the Anglo-Norman domain, and the locus of their praise for Henry centres on his dual achievement in having contained the rebellious tendencies of the Normans whilst maintaining order and justice throughout England.[13] If Rufus' example showed how great the English kings' potential could be, Henry exemplified the difficulty of fulfilling royal potential. Henry had proven, for the most part, an excellent king, but there was also overt criticism of his consequential vices, and arguably there has been insufficient appreciation of the degree to which some commentators held him culpable for the succession crisis of 1135.[14] One historian writing during and just after Henry's reign suggested that the king had made two fatal decisions: first, he had granted his legitimate son, William Adelin, too much power and responsibility at too young an age.[15] Henry's unjust preferment of his son precipitated the boy's inability to overcome the contingencies that resulted in the *White Ship* disaster of 1120, which he did not survive.[16] In the eyes of commentators, his other mistake was sending his legitimate daughter away from the orbit of English tutelage in order to marry the sinful and corrupting Emperor of Germany.[17] These two decisions would soon cost England its peace.

The reign of King Henry's successor, his nephew Stephen of Blois (r. 1135-1154), was almost completely overshadowed by the civil war fought between the crown and the Angevins, who were led by King Henry's legitimate daughter, Empress Matilda, and his illegitimate son, Robert

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[12] See: *GP*, 142-3.
[13] For instance, see: *HE*, vol. 6, 450-453. *HA*, 698-701.
[14] For instance, see discussion in: T. S. Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', *Journal of Medieval History*, 44 (2018), 21-38, at 36. For the contrary view, see, for instance: B. Weiler, 'Royal justice and royal virtue in William of Malmesbury's *Historia nouella* and Walter Map's *De nugis curialium*', in I. P. Bejczy and R. G. Newhauser (eds.), *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, (Leiden, 2005), 317–39, at 320-21. See also: Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 698-701.
[15] *GR*, 758-63.
[16] *GR*, 758-65.
[17] *GR*, 762-5.

Earl of Gloucester. The intestine war elicited tacit comparison with the Great Roman Civil War, and its protagonists were variously characterised as or contrasted with Julius Caesar and Pompey Magnus, who were seen as the progenitors of the archetypical 'more than civil' conflict, i.e. a civil war fought between relatives.[18] Although the period used to be referred to as 'The Anarchy', scholars are now warier of such emphatic labels.[19] That said, contemporary accounts are replete with reflection on the consequences and gravity of disorder, and there were years when the balance of power in England swung unpredictably from one month to the next.[20] King Stephen was captured in the Battle of Lincoln in January 1141, and a few months later Robert of Gloucester was captured by forces loyal to Stephen at the Rout of Winchester. Stephen's credulity and the burden of the Angevin threat weakened centralised power, while during the Empress Matilda's brief time as 'Lady of England' her blunt arrogance earned her little authority. Magnates and lesser nobles capitalised on the power vacuum to extend their own ambitions, their allegiances turning with events, and left the English political landscape difficult if not impossible for commentators to reckon. These decades were a stern test for those who had spent their careers interpreting God's plan in the course of events, but arguably they perceived a heaven-sent opportunity in the task. As we shall see throughout this study, they did not shrink from the scale of the challenge, but remained true to the incontrovertible tenets of their faith, refined their understanding of God and His ways according to what they saw revealed, and in some cases recognised the fulfilment of scriptural prophecy in the twists, turns, and outcomes they witnessed.

King Stephen died in 1154 and was succeeded as king by the son of the Empress Matilda, Henry of Anjou, who acceded to the throne as King Henry II. Stephen's eldest legitimate son and presumptive heir, Eustace, had died suddenly in 1153, and Stephen had decided to pass over his younger son William to bring the war to a conclusion, naming Henry as his successor. Henry was still in his early twenties at his accession, but since 1150 he had been Duke of Normandy and had come into possession of Anjou and Aquitaine through inheritance and marriage, respectively. For his years, he had proven himself strategic and deft in navigating the politics of the day: he had seen off the challenges of those on the continent who had sought to capitalise on his youth and the situation in England while, later, his vigorous campaign against Stephen ultimately won him the crown. The excitement around his accession might have given rise to certain of the ideas that are treated in Chapter Five.

Experience and memory of individual events and historical trajectories had considerable bearing on the ideological discourse of the post-conquest period, but they were far from the only influences. After the Norman Conquest, political unification prompted a need for social integration, but this process took time, owing to recurrences of political turmoil, the top-down reform of the English Church, and the emergence of new branches of a shared Anglo-Norman

[18] For instance, see: *HN*, 60-61. *GS*, 140-41; 56-7; 162-3.
[19] For instance, see: G. J. White, 'The myth of the anarchy', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 22 (1999), 323-37.
[20] For instance, see: *HE*, vol. 6, 450-453. *HA*, 700-701. *GS*, 1-9. *HN*, 32-3.

culture. Local disunity and political strife combined to encourage reflection on what steps were needed to achieve communal unity.[21] Culture and thought were also shaped by the reception of ideas about Britain's geography and climate.[22] As a temperate and abundant island towards the edge of the medieval world, its situation and nature helped inspire and form its inhabitants' responses to even the loftiest of questions.[23] The distinct seasonal cycle, that brought with it long summer days and long winter nights, encouraged reflection on the cyclical rise and fall in human affairs, and lent thinkers a rich reservoir of metaphorical imagery to draw from.[24] The health and plenty of the island's wild animals served as a barometer of order.[25] Another font of imagery was the English Channel, whose narrow straits separated the British Isles from Normandy and the continent and that, together with the North Sea, linked almost every major invasion of the island.[26] The temperament of the Channel's waters was frequently interpreted to reveal meaning, and analogy was drawn between events that unfolded on its waves and those of other famous and meaningful sea and river crossings.[27] The most visible symbols of Britain's built landscape also underwent a rapid transformation at the time, as new castles and grand new cathedrals rose up as physical manifestations of continental influences and the new order.[28]

The intellectual climate of the late eleventh and twelfth century has often been characterised as one of renewal and renaissance.[29] The proliferation of new monastic foundations and even whole orders, as well as the growth of the larger urban schools, in particular the cathedral schools, afforded wider opportunity for education in Latin and engagement with major authorities and the concepts they had espoused.[30] Giles Constable has noted a transition of emphasis away from the patristic and early medieval focus on inward moral restoration and towards an attention to communal and institutional renewal.

> This emphasis on exterior or supra-individual renewal was a leading aspect of reform ideology in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Both religious and secular texts of the

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[21] See: S. O. Sønnesyn, "'In uinea Sorech laborare": the cultivation of unity in twelfth-century monastic historiography', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 36 (2013): 167–87.
[22] See: A. J. Hingst, *The Written World: Past and Place in the Work of Orderic Vitalis* (Notre Dame IN, 2009)
[23] See: L. Staley, *The Island Garden: England's Language of Nation from Gildas to Marvell* (Notre Dame IN, 2012), especially 15-70. J. Gillingham, 'Civilizing the English? The English histories of William of Malmesbury and David Hume', *Historical Research* 74 (2001), 17–43.
[24] For instance, see: Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 16-17. *HA*, 776-7. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, trans. D. Whitelock, D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: a Revised Translation* (London, 1961), 265.
[25] For instance, see: *Bede*, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 14-17. *GS*, 2-5.
[26] I spoke on this theme in a paper titled: 'The English Channel in post-conquest thought', delivered at The 36th International Conference of the Haskins Society, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill NC, USA, 2-5 Nov 2017.
[27] Ibid and, for instance, see: *GR*, 564-7; 758-63. *HA*, 444-7.
[28] See: Bates, *William the Conqueror*, 18.
[29] Seminal works of Anglophone scholarship on the theme include: C. H. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, new edn. (Cambridge MA, 1971). R. W. Southern, 'The place of England in the twelfth-century renaissance', *History* 45 (1960), 201-16. R. L. Benson and G. Constable (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982).
[30] D. Luscombe, 'The twelfth-century renaissance', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c.350–c.1450* (Cambridge, 1988), 306-341, at 310.

period are filled with terms reflecting a sense of the renewal of Christian society and institutions.[31]

As I hope to show, for their part the historians recognised that the two were mutually interdependent – that the desired interior restoration was unattainable without exterior renewal. The rise of the schools and the nascent universities also fostered a wide range of theological discourse, some of it with a keen interest in natural philosophy, although the atemporal perspective of most dialectical enquiry did not suit detailed explication of the temporal workings of fortune, Providence, and divine justice.[32] Typically, questions such as these were not taken up as subjects of normative debate.[33] Another intellectual influence came from the period's burgeoning interest in the narrative content of classical literature.[34] While Virgil and Lucan's works had long been used as pedagogic tools in the teaching of grammar and rhetoric, the late-eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed a renewed interest in their literal and allegorical content.[35] Partly as a result of their educational utility, Virgil and Lucan were by far the two most widely read classical authors, even in the cloister, and their influence on and ubiquity in the period is difficult to overstate.[36] The Servian and Fulgentian commentary traditions on the *Aeneid* were updated with greater emphasis on allegorical exposition, while Anselm of Laon (d. 1117), best known for his *Glossa ordinaria*, penned a new commentary on Lucan.[37] Where the historians of the later eleventh century exhibit a slightly stronger Virgilian influence, arguably it is Lucan's *Pharsalia* whose influence is more prominent in the twelfth-century histories.

Thought is conditioned and driven by a broad range of circumstances peculiar to a given time and place although, in the Middle Ages, ideas responded to some or all of a hierarchy of questions. The questions at the base of the hierarchy were often local, circumstantial, and thus transient, but those at the top would have been of import to any Christian, wherever and whenever they had lived. The question at the very top of that hierarchy was the nature of God. Next was understanding God's plan for humanity, reckoning the mechanisms by which he steered the course

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[31] G. Constable, 'Renewal and reform in religious life: concepts and realities', in Benson and Constable (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal*, 37-67, at 38.

[32] See discussion in: W. Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton NJ, 1972). On developments concerning the approach to these questions through the analysis of testimony, see: M. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History* (Manchester, 2011), 275-284.

[33] Although Thomas Aquinas did touch upon some of them later, See: J. Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics* (Cambridge, 1999).

[34] The literature is voluminous, but see: Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 128-33. W. Wetherbee, 'From late antiquity to the twelfth century', in A. Minnis and I. Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Volume II: The Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2005), 97-144. E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (London, 1953). L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1983). P. Von Moos, *Entre histoire et literature: Communication et culture au Moyen Âge* (Florence, 2005). R. M. Thomson, 'England and the twelfth-century renaissance', *Past and Present* 101 (1983), 3-21.

[35] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 128-33. C. Baswell, 'The medieval allegorisation of the '*Aeneid*': MS Cambridge, Peterhouse 158', *Traditio* 41 (1985), 181-237.

[36] D. Hopkins et al. (eds.) *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English literature: Volume 1 (800-1558)* (Oxford, 2016). J. M. Ziolkowski and M. C. J. Putnam (eds.), *The Virgilian tradition: The First Fifteen Hundred Years* (New Haven CT, 2008).

[37] Baswell, 'The medieval allegorisation of the *Aeneid*', 181-237. B. M. Marti, 'Literary criticism in the mediaeval commentaries on Lucan', *Transactions of the Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 72 (1941), 245-54, at 246.

of time, and defining how people, in this context the English and Normans, ought to enact that plan in the temporal world. This study is interested in the historians' mobilisation of past events and historical patterns in so far as it served to answer these loftiest of questions.

This study considers those Latin historical works of the twelfth century that alluded to or mentioned Julius Caesar and/or fortune. As noted, its purpose is to explicate the ideological leaps – the *original* responses to those lofty questions listed above – that were a product of that period's reckoning of fortune and contemplation of Caesar's experience with fortune. Caesar's fame reverberated through history, but during the Middle Ages it was not until the twelfth century that English or Norman historians wove the term *fortuna* into the explanatory paradigm their narratives espoused.[38] Even during the twelfth century, not all did so, and so it will be necessary to dwell on the works of those who did.[39] On this score, the histories of four of the twelfth-century historians are of especial relevance: Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and the author of the *Gesta Stephani*. Because it is also my intent to trace the historiographical background of the twelfth-century innovations, close attention will also be due to the major historians of the post-conquest eleventh century. William of Jumièges showed little interest in Caesarean analogy, or indeed in explicating the cosmological significances of William's reign, and so the focus here will be on his major contemporaries, Guy of Amiens and William of Poitiers.[40] Before contextualising the period's interest in fortune and in Julius Caesar, it is worthwhile to situate the most relevant of the historians in the wider context of the period's historical enterprise.

The historical tradition in England and on the continent can be said to have taken two general forms, each of antique origin.[41] One is the chronicle, whose authors tended to record major events in chronological sequence.[42] Chroniclers rarely offered much in the way of historical commentary, and as a result their entries are usually brief and matter-of-fact. Of more interest to the present purposes is the history, whose literary form and commentary on a sustained theme and subject matter 'often overrides the chronological sequence of events'.[43] Gildas wrote an early history of Britain, *De excidio Britanniae et Conquestu*, no later than the 540s, which exhorted the princes of the age to turn from vice and towards Christ.[44] Gildas, like his ancient forebears, was concerned with cause and effect in history, and followed the influential Late Antique Christian historian Orosius in warning his contemporaries that God brought down hardship and punishment

[38] It was mentioned occasionally by a handful of earlier writers, but in no consistent or systematic fashion. The limited usages in the relevant eleventh-century histories are: Guy of Amiens, *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio*, ed. and trans. F. Barlow (Oxford, 1999), 30. William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi*, ed. and trans. R. H. C. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1998), 172. *Encomium Emma reginae*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell, rev. S. Keynes (Cambridge, 1998), 16; 48. Discussed in Chapter One.
[39] See full discussion in Chapter One.
[40] William of Jumièges, *Gesta Normannorum ducum*, ed. and trans. E. M. C. van Houts, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1992-5).
[41] A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in Medieval England c. 550-c.1307* (London, 1974), 29.
[42] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 29.
[43] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 29.
[44] Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniae*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom, *The Ruin of Britain* (Chichester, 1978). Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 1-5.

on those who abandoned virtue and faith.[45] Gildas belonged to the Brythonic monastic milieu of western Britain, as did the author or authors of the *Historia Britonnum* of c. 830, which was either the compilation of the work of many authors, or the product of a Welsh monk named 'Nennius'.[46] The debate concerning the *Historia Britonnum*'s authorship is ongoing, but for the purpose of clarity I shall refer henceforth to Nennius as the work's author.[47] Nennius' foremost concern was to draw out the Britons' supposed proud history, and to that end he assembled a wide range of tales from now-lost sources with little attention to consistency or critical discernment.[48] He was less concerned than Gildas with morality and faith as the determiners of order and advancement, and although he trusted in the eventual victory of the Britons over the Anglo-Saxon invaders, he did not provide any reason, providential or otherwise, as to why this would come to pass.[49] As Chapter Two will address, Nennius' work was of considerable influence during the twelfth century, when it was taken up as the basis for one of the period's most famous and controversial works of literature.

By far the most influential British historian of the Early Middle Ages was Bede, whose *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Historia ecclesiastica*), completed 731, is the jewel in the crown of a wide-ranging oeuvre of chronicles and lesser histories.[50] His great work is an edifying history of the salvation of humanity that held the Roman Church and its rites aloft as the one path to the realisation of the human *telos*. Bede's writing is rich in literary merit, and betrays his keen interest in theological and other ideological problems.[51] He deftly explained historical processes and the ideas that underpinned them, but did not incorporate *fortuna* in his explanatory lexicon, perhaps being unwilling to complicate the edifying precept that God raised up the virtuous and cast down the sinful.[52] It is difficult to overstate Bede's influence on the form and subject of later histories, but his was still a nascent explanatory paradigm. Bede's was the last major national history written in England until the late eleventh century, but in Normandy a Frenchman from St Quentin, Dudo, was commissioned to write a history of the Norman dukes and duchy, the *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum* of c. 994-1015.[53] *Fortuna* is mentioned a handful of times in Dudo's work, where, following classical precedent, it is a positive trait primarily deployed in eulogy.[54]

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[45] Orosius, *Historiarum aduersum paganos libri septem, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 5 (Vienna, 1882). Orosius, *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*, trans. A. T. Fear (Liverpool, 2010). Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 3-4.
[46] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*. Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 12.
[47] For discussion, see: Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 6. D. Dumville, '"Nennius" and the *Historia Brittonum*', *Studia Celtica* 10-11 (1975-6), 78-95.
[48] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 5-12.
[49] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 11.
[50] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*. Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 16.
[51] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 19; 24-25.
[52] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 20-22.
[53] Dudo of St Quentin, *De Moribus et Actis Primorum Normanniae Ducum*, ed. J. Lair (Caen, 1865). Dudo of St Quentin, *De Moribus et Actis Primorum Normanniae Ducum*, trans, E. Christiansen, *History of the Normans*, (Woodbridge, 1998).
[54] Dudo of St Quentin, *De Moribus et Actis Primorum Normanniae Ducum*, 144; 158; 163; 187; 222; 245. On the 'classical precedent', see 'Fortune and Providence' below.

In Normandy several decades later, the Benedictine monk William of Jumièges finished his own *Gesta Normannorum ducum* in or around 1070.[55] With a view to edifying his readers and legitimising his patron William the Conqueror, William laid out a narrative that was at once explanatory and chronologically sequential. The divine plan for the world and the manifestation of divine justice are not prominent themes in the work, although the outcome of the Battle of Hastings is attributed to God's punishment of the English for their sin.[56] The other two major histories written in Normandy in the wake of the conquest were more clearly written through panegyric lenses, and with greater literary pretence.[57] These were Guy of Amiens' verse *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* of c. 1068 and William of Poitiers' prose *Gesta Guillelmi* of c. 1071-7.[58] Where the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* focusses on the Norman invasion and its immediate aftermath, the *Gesta Guilelmi* ranges more fully through William the Conqueror's career up to 1071. As chapters Two and Three shall argue, the nexus of these historians' praise for William the Conqueror was the suggestion that he had facilitated the unification of England and Normandy, and thereby advanced his subjects' hopes for salvation. The period's regard for the link between unity and salvation is a topic which permeates this study. At first glance, it might not seem surprising that Guy, as bishop of Amiens, and William of Poitiers, a knight-turned-priest, placed more emphasis than their contemporary on the unification of the political world outside of the cloister. Yet, for them, the true benefit of that unity was that it helped people steer truer courses towards salvation. For Bede, Guy, William of Poitiers, and for the monastic historians who wrote during the twelfth century, unity was a prerequisite to the advancement of the providential plan. It was a lofty good whose attainment occupied the energies of all Christians thinkers alike, whether secular or cloistered. As for the character of Guy and William of Poitiers' works: in the words of Antonia Gransden, the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* is more 'eulogistic' and 'fulsome' than the *Gesta Normannorum ducum*.[59] It is also important to note for our purposes that both Guy and William of Poitiers repeatedly compare William the Conqueror with Julius Caesar in both tacit and in overt terms.[60] It used to be assumed that these were all eulogising instances of the 'outdoing' topos described by Ernst Curtius, but Emily Winkler has shown how the historians strove for nuance and measure in these comparisons so that they might better serve the author's arguments.[61] As far as both of these continental historians were concerned, the events of the Norman Conquest were given to a narrative that God rewarded the virtuous and punished the wicked. It was left to the next generation to write of events that could not be accounted to conform to that rationale.

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[55] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 94.
[56] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 96.
[57] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 95.
[58] *Carmen*, xl-xlii. *GG*, xx.
[59] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 99.
[60] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 99.
[61] For the old view, see: Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 99. Curtius, *European Literature*, 162-5. For the more nuanced analysis, See: E. A. Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past: William of Poitiers, language, and history', *Journal of Medieval History* 42 (2016), 456-78.

Some of the historians of the second post-conquest generation took up the challenge of offering a more fulsome model of providential causation than was to be found in the works of their forebears. Arguably, this is most apparent in the works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and the author of the *Gesta Stephani*. Before considering the generation's historical culture more broadly, it is worthwhile to introduce each of these major historians in turn. Orderic Vitalis was born in 1075 at Atcham in Shropshire to an English mother and a French father. He was sent as a child oblate to the Benedictine Abbey of St Évroul in Normandy at age ten, where he continued the education that he had started in his early years at Shrewsbury.[62] The extent of the curriculum of study at St Évroul is not known conclusively but its library holdings were diverse, ranging through scripture, patristics, educational treatises of various kinds, and classical texts.[63] Many of the house's brethren had been trained in the leading cathedral schools.[64] Orderic mentioned several of these learned men by name, most famously John of Rheims, the abbey's schoolmaster and a historian in his own right, whose influence might have catalysed Orderic's literary and historical ambitions.[65] At some point, Orderic began compiling the annals of his house, perhaps as early as 1095, and by no later than 1109 he was engaged in redacting and updating William of Jumièges' *Gesta Normannorum ducum*.[66] At this point he had risen through the deaconate and was ordained a priest of the house in 1107.[67] His extensive scribal activity – his hand is preserved in numerous manuscripts - suggests that he oversaw the abbey's scriptorium, and perhaps its library.[68] By 1114 he had begun what was to become his *magnum opus*, a *Historia ecclesiastica*.[69] Orderic's mature work escapes ready summary because it grew over nearly three decades into a sprawling, thirteen book behemoth. It began in the 1110s and early 1120s as an account of the house's formative years and the Norman Conquest of England, and later in the 1120s and early 1130s ranged more fully through the house's past and its connections with the world.[70] Through the remainder of the 1130s, and up to 1141, Orderic composed an extraordinarily wide-ranging and 'roughly' chronological narrative that spanned the reign of William the Conqueror up to near-contemporary events.[71] In the later 1130s he added books on the life of Christ, the apostles, the evangelists, and the history of the early Church.[72] When all was said and done, the *Historia ecclesiastica*'s structure connected the house to the deeds of its benefactors and to those events whose consequences were of moment to its brethren. Its vast scope reflected Orderic's conviction that the individual's life – even the life of the cloister monk - played out within a grand causal matrix whose intertwined cause and effect determined the relative disorder of the

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[62] *GND*, vol. 1, lxvi.
[63] See the extant twelfth-century library catalogue in: G. Nortier, *Les Bibliothèques médiévales des abbayes bénédictines de Normandie* (Paris, 1971).
[64] *HE*, vol. 1, 22.
[65] *HE*, vol. 1, 20-22.
[66] *GND*, vol. 1, lxvi.
[67] *GND*, vol. 1, lxvi.
[68] *HE*, vol. 1, 24. *GND*, vol. 1, lxvi.
[69] *HE*, vol. 1, 31.
[70] *HE*, vol. 1, 46.
[71] *HE*, vol. 1, 47-8.
[72] *HE*, vol. 1, 45.

world, which stood in the way of salvation. It has been said that he and his monastic contemporaries wrote in order to resolve the discord they narrated into spiritual unity.[73] As I intend to show, just as much effort went into analysing the causal web that shaped this life so that, in future, there might be little or no discord to narrate at all.

Perhaps the most celebrated of all the twelfth century historians was another Benedictine monk, William of Malmesbury. William was probably born c1088-1095, and after entering Malmesbury Abbey as a child he developed a voracious appetite for reading and learning, developing into a polymath.[74] He was exceptionally widely read for the time, especially in classical literature, and he came to oversee the scriptorium and library of his house.[75] He turned his pen to history at a young age - writing in two productive periods he amassed an extensive oeuvre of histories, hagiographies, and more besides.[76] The works of consequence for the present purpose are his three major histories of England - it was at the resolution of national history that William felt it most pressing to frame human causation within a holistic model of the operation of Providence. Miracle tends to predominate in hagiographical writing, and in local histories the minutiae of human affairs are pushed to the fore where they obscure the higher processes that bound them. William situated himself in the Bedan tradition but, instead of pursuing a unified ecclesiastical history, he first composed a history with a secular focus, the *Gesta regum Anglorum*, and later a history of the English Church and prelates, the *Gesta pontificum Anglorum*.[77] The former narrates English history from the time of the Romans through to 1125, while the latter runs through the history of each bishopric in turn. The first versions of both works were completed with prodigious speed in c. 1125.[78] William returned to the texts around a decade later, predominantly to soften some of the harshest critiques of prominent figures.[79] His editorialising offers a glimpse into his own regard for what he had written and, as Chapter One shall show, through his amendments he inadvertently confirmed certain of his ideological beliefs that otherwise had found only tacit expression in his oeuvre. In 1140, William began the *Historia nouella*, a history of recent and contemporary events. He traced the origins of the civil war of Stephen's reign and presented an Angevin-leaning narrative of events up to the end of 1142.[80] Scholars have made much of William's supposed struggle to account for turns of events that countered his expectations and narrative trajectory.[81] In fact, as we shall see, for all that William regretted the Angevins' troubles, he recognised that their travails relayed an important lesson, and provided an opportunity

[73] Sønnesyn, "'In uinea sorech laborare", 185.
[74] *GR*, vol. 2, xxxvii-xl.
[75] R. M. Thomson, *William of Malmesbury* rev. edn. (Woodbridge, 2003), 29-31; 48-61; 76-96.
[76] Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, 225.
[77] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 167-8.
[78] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 168.
[79] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 168; 180-182.
[80] *HN*, xxix.
[81] For a summary of the debate around William's handling of such events, see: Forster, 'William of Malmebsury and *fortuna*', 22-24. There, I make reference to: Weiler, 'Royal justice and royal virtue', 320-21. S. Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence in William of Malmesbury's *Historia nouella*', *Viator* 41 (2010), 113–32, at 129-30. Gillingham, 'Civilizing the English', 35; 43.

to demonstrate the robustness of the explanatory model he had developed a decade and a half earlier.[82]

The writing of national history was not the exclusive preserve of the black monks. Henry of Huntingdon, author of the popular *Historia Anglorum*, was a secular cleric and archdeacon.[83] Born no later than c. 1088, Henry was sent as a boy to be educated at the court of Bishop Robert Bloet of Lincoln, where he would have been surrounded by the elites of ecclesial and secular society.[84] It is probable that he was educated by a student of the renowned poet Marbod of Rennes.[85] An extensive collection of Henry's epigrams and a verse herbal of his authorship have survived, but he is better known for a major prose history of the kingdom and the origins of its people that he undertook from around 1129 at the direction of the new bishop of Lincoln, Alexander 'the Magnificent'.[86] Henry suggested that he wrote his history for the benefit of the less-well educated, although the accessibility and elegance of his Latin should not distract from the work's literary sophistication and ideological engagement.[87] Henry's narrative is guided by themes, despite its predominantly linear chronology. In Diana Greenway's words:

> … Henry calls on his readers to take note of the examples of vices and virtues afforded by history in order to reform their lives. His pages are full of individual cases, but more interestingly, he interprets the history of the whole English people in this light, pursuing an idea adumbrated in both Gildas and Bede, and based on Old Testament models. Henry writes a strongly thematic narrative in which five invasions – by the Romans, the Picts and Scots, the Angles and Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans – are seen as five punishments or plagues inflicted by God on a faithless people.[88]

The *Historia Anglorum* circulated widely and the stages of its composition have been preserved in a host of manuscript witnesses.[89] Greenway has identified six major versions, which appeared between 1131 and 1155, although the narrative never extended beyond December 1154.[90]

The identity of the final author at the heart of this study has been the subject of some debate, but it is now thought to have been Robert of Lewes, a former Cluniac monk and later administrator who was raised to the bishopric of Bath in 1136, occupying the see until his death in 1166.[91] Little doubt now remains that Robert penned the *Gesta Stephani*, a contemporary explanatory history of national scope whose narrative spans the whole of King Stephen's reign and

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[82] An aspect of this research that has now appeared in print in: Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*'.
[83] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 187.
[84] *HA*, xxix-xxxii. Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 195-6.
[85] *HA*, xxx-xxxii.
[86] *HA*, lvii; lxvii.
[87] *HA*, xxxiii; lviii.
[88] *HA*, lix.
[89] *HA*, cxliv-clviii.
[90] *HA*, lxvii-lxxvii.
[91] The best argument for the *Gesta Stephani*'s authorship is that of R.H.C. Davis, which was printed as part of the introduction to the OMT volume. See: *GS*, xviii-xxxviii. Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 189-90. E. King, 'The *Gesta stephani*', in D. Bates, J. Crick, and S. Hamilton (eds.), *Writing Medieval Biography, 750-1250: Essays in Honour of Frank Barlow* (Woodbridge, 2006), 195-206.

is independent of all known textual authorities.[92] The history was probably written in two stages.[93] The narrative from 1135-1147 was composed around 1148, while the account of events of 1148 onwards was penned after 1153.[94] During his first productive phase, Robert, although he sought to deflect responsibility away from some of the king's failures, depicted Stephen's reign as 'the king's punishment for [his] sin and his [later] retribution'.[95] By the time he took up his pen again, Robert's sympathies had shifted and to some extent given way to apathy, at least towards the rival claimants to the throne.[96] The *Gesta Stephani* is characterised by an intricate and difficult Latin style wrought with classicising terminology.[97] Despite Robert's evident grasp of complex Latin, his self-confessed literary ambitions, and the conducive subject matter, he resisted saturating his prose with intertextual figures, and seems to have been particularly averse to classical allusion and echo. While the editors of the OMT edition admitted that their parsing of the text for classical intertextualities was not exhaustive, I have undertaken a thorough, word-by-word investigation of the first half of the narrative and found little evidence to challenge the above assessment.[98] His history is more restrained in reference and allusion to classical sources than those of the three writers introduced above, although its pages are still smattered with scriptural quotation.[99] R. H. C. Davis noted that Robert 'wrote about the present as if it were the past, in order to give it the grandeur of antiquity'.[100] Perhaps he worried that prolific allusion to classical works might detract from the sense of temporal displacement. In any case, his penchant for portraying the horror of war at times bears an uncanny resemblance at least to the *emotion* of Lucan's historical epic of civil war.[101] Also of note is Robert's resolute concern for the dignity and duties of the episcopal office, and that despite its wealth of secondary detail, the *Gesta Stephani* attributes causation to God almost as prominently as the *Historia Anglorum*.[102]

There were other major and lesser historians writing in Normandy and England during these years, but any mention of them in the analyses that follow will be auxiliary due to considerations of content and scope. Geoffrey Gaimar's *L'Estoire des Engleis* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* were both vernacular works, and only portions of the latter can justifiably be termed explanatory history.[103] The epistemic challenges that already face a study such as this, of ideologies that found only tacit expression, are steep enough without attempting to determine equivalences in technical terminology across different languages. Of the Latin historians of the period 1095-1154,

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[92] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 188.
[93] *GS*, xix-xxi.
[94] *GS*, xxi.
[95] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 192. Insertions my own according to my understanding of the author's meaning.
[96] *GS*, xxi.
[97] *GS*, xxx-xxxi.
[98] I presented my findings in an as-yet unpublished paper, 'The *Gesta Stephani*'s atypical use of intertextual figures', presented at the Leeds International Medieval Conference 2018, Session 521.
[99] *GS*, xxx-xxxi.
[100] *GS*, xxxi.
[101] R. Morse, *Truth and convention in Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1991), 116-18. See also *GS*, xxxi.
[102] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 192-3.
[103] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 142-3. Geoffrey Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis*, ed. and trans. I. Short, *History of the English* (Oxford, 2009).

only the four introduced above, and one special case that I will address below, mentioned *both* Julius Caesar and fortune in their works. Eadmer, whose *Historia nouorum in Anglia* of c. 1095-1123 strongly influenced later writers' regard for the Anselmian archiepiscopate and the character of William Rufus, neither used *fortuna* nor demonstrated any interest in the historical Julius Caesar or in characterising protagonists after him.[104] John of Worcester, whose *Chronicon ex Chronicis* is more descriptive in mode than analytic-explanatory, mentioned *fortuna* three times only, and Caesar no more than once.[105] Finally, Symeon of Durham mentioned *fortuna* five times, four of which are original usages, but none of which appear in the interesting 'non-derivative' sections of his *Historia regum* that relays events of 1119-1129.[106] Neither did Symeon mention Caesar.

The one 'special case' mentioned above is Geoffrey of Monmouth and his *Historia regum Britanniae*, 'a legendary history of the Britons from prehistoric times until the late seventh century A.D.'.[107] Geoffrey's work, like Nennius' before him, contravened the boundaries of the genre because of its admission of legendary material under the guise of history. Geoffrey did use the term *fortuna* to explain twists and turns in his narrative of 'events', but as even his contemporaries recognised, he was under no constraint in having to fit his causal explanations around established historical testimony.[108] As such, while there may be cause for Galfridian scholars to revisit his conception of fortune in light of the conclusions of this study, he cannot be numbered amongst those of most interest for our purposes - those who were at least notionally engaged in scrutinising historical testimony as a means of determining theological and cosmological truth.[109] Geoffrey also mentioned Julius Caesar, and heavily amplified Nennius' account of the Roman's invasions of Britain.[110] Geoffrey's account is rich, and will be examined for any ideological argument in Chapter Two, although the *Historia regum Britanniae* did not conjure with the ideas that are central to the final three chapters here. All told, Geoffrey's project was never comparable, whether in approach or content, with that of the 'truthful' historians that are of the greatest interest for our purposes.[111] As Antonia Gransden put it, 'Geoffrey was a romance writer masquerading as a historian'.[112] That said, his work did challenge Britain's recognised early history, was a vehicle for his own ideas, and the analysis to follow in Chapter Two concludes that it may have provoked a rather more

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[104] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 136-142. Eadmer, *Vita Anselmi*, ed. and trans. R. W. Southern, *Life of St Anselm* (Oxford, 1972). Eadmer, *Historia nouorum in Anglia*, ed. M. Rule (London, 1884). Eadmer, *Historia nouorum in Anglia*, trans. G. Bosanquet, *Eadmer's History of Recent Events in England* (London, 1964).
[105] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 143-148. John of Worcester, *Chronicon*, ed. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. J. Bray and P. McGurk, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, 3 vols. [ii, iii] (Oxford, 1995-). For occurrences of *fortuna* therein, see:, John of Worcester, *Chronicon*, vol. 2, 256; 438; vol. 3, 234.
[106] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 150. Symeon of Durham, *Historia regum*, ed. T. Arnold, *Symeonis monachi opera omnia*, 2 vols. (London, 1882-5), vol. 2. For occurrences of *fortuna*, see: Symeon of Durham, *Historia regum*, 55-6 (twice); 73; 81; 134 (quoted from John of Worcester).
[107] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 201. *HRB*.
[108] A full list of occurrences of *fortuna* in *HRB* is presented at the beggining of Chapter One.
[109] For two existing studies, whose conclusions are of no moment to this study, see: S. Echard, "For mortals are moved by these conditions': Fate, fortune and providence in Geoffrey of Monmouth', in N. J. Lacy (ed.), *The Fortunes of King Arthur* (Cambridge, 2005), 13-28, especially 14-16. K. J. Höltgen, 'King Arthur and fortuna', in E. D. Kennedy (ed.), *King Arthur: A Casebook* (New York and London, 2002), 121-138.
[110] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 203.
[111] I discuss the concept of 'truth' later, but also see: Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 202-3.
[112] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 202.

substantial response from the bona-fide historians of the period than has previously been recognised.

There has been great interest over the years in the post-conquest historians and their works. Positivist, Rankean concern for straining away as much of the partisanship and bias of the record as possible in order to reconstruct events as they happened has been overtaken by interest in the historians themselves and greater sensitivity towards their mentality and motivations.[113] The postmodern assertions of the linguistic turn, which contended that texts are the sole loci of knowledge, have been tempered by approaches to the past that are more careful in their synthesis of textual evidence and the metanarrative of historical context.[114] With the more uncompromising methodological viewpoints having been discredited, scholars have shown greater consideration both of the histories' literary form and the wider context that governed their creation. The final section of this introduction plots the methodological course that I aim to steer throughout this study, but here it shall suffice to mention that most historiographical studies of recent years, even those with a literary focus, have attempted to balance considerations of text with those of time and place.[115] With the discipline having secured the epistemological and methodological licence to interrogate the historians' intentions, scholars have shone light on various aspects of that whole. Perhaps inevitably, there has been much debate over which considerations were primary in shaping any given historian's output. One strand of this debate is of particular relevance here. In 2001, John Gillingham argued that 'to a depressing extent modern perceptions of medieval patterns of thought still imagine them to have been dominated by theological and religious ideas'.[116] Gillingham and others sought to assert the primacy of the historians' secular considerations, amongst which were academic interest, institutional advantage, and the 'civilizing' forces of firm governance and the emergence of a more robust market economy.[117] Tacit in these arguments is the sense that the historians' stated religious concerns were tertiary interests or even the empty words of commonplace. The response has been robust.

Björn Weiler, Sigbjørn Sønessyn, and Sverre Bagge have placed renewed emphasis on the historians' explicitly stated religious aims of understanding God and the place of lapsarian humanity

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[113] J. Lake, 'Current approaches to medieval historiography', *History Compass* 13 (2015), 89-109, at 89-90.
[114] Three notable defences of contextually-sensitive approaches to historical texts are: Q. Skinner, 'Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas', *History and Theory* 8 (1969), 3-53. G. M. Spiegel, 'History, historicism, and the social logic of the text in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 65 (1990), 59-86. And Spiegel's continuation: G. M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore MD, 1997).
[115] For instance, see: L. Ashe, *Fiction and History in England: 1066-1200* (Cambridge, 2007), L. Shopkow, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington D. C., 1987). E. Albu, *The Normans in Their Histories: Propaganda, Myth and Subversion* (Woodbridge, 2001).
[116] Gillingham, 'Civilizing the English', 43.
[117] Gillingham, 'Civilizing the English', 17-43. Gillingham was not alone in asserting the primacy of secular considerations over religious ones - see: R. M. Thomson, 'Satire, irony and humour in William of Malmesbury', in C. J. Mews, C. J. Nederman and R. M. Thomson (eds.), *Rhetoric and Renewal in the Latin West, 1100-1540: Essays in Honour of John O. Ward* (Turnhout, 2003), 115-27. R. M. Thomson, 'William of Malmesbury's vision of history', in R. M. Thomson, E. Dolmans, and E. A. Winkler (eds.), *Discovering William of Malmesbury* (Woodbridge, 2018). R. Vaughan, 'The past in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval History* 12 (1986), 1–14.

within His temporal creation, and of facilitating the cultivation of virtue and spiritual advancement.[118] The centrality of religious imperatives had also been asserted in earlier works, although in part as a consequence of their brevity, and the strength of the scholarly currents that they were battling, their influence had faded.[119] Roger Ray's insightful studies of eleventh and twelfth-century historiography are especially deserving of note. These studies, and in particular Sigbjørn Sønnesyn's *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, have admirably exposited the theological and ethical frameworks that tied the historians' various ends together in the service of still higher, moral and ultimately spiritual aspirations. This study owes much to their authors' efforts, although I shall later dispute certain of their conclusions.

[118] B. Weiler, 'Royal justice and royal virtue', 317–39. B. Weiler, 'William of Malmesbury, Henry I, and the Gesta regum Anglorum', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 31 (2009), 157–76. B. Weiler, 'William of Malmesbury on Kingship', *History* 90 (2005), 3–22. S. Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence', 113–32. S. O. Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History* (Woodbridge, 2012). S. O. Sønnesyn, '"In vinea sorech laborare": the cultivation of unity in twelfth-century monastic historiography', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 36 (2013), 167–87. S. O. Sønnesyn, 'Eternity in time, unity in particularity: the theological basis of typological interpretations in twelfth-century historiography, in M. T. Kretschmer (ed.), *La typologie biblique comme forme de pensée dans l'historiographie médiévale* (Turnhout, 2014), 77–95. S. O. Sønnesyn, "Studiosi abdita investigant': Orderic Vitalis and the mystical morals of history', in C. C. Rozier et al (eds.), *Orderic Vitalis: Life, Works and Interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2016), 284-97.

[119] R. D. Ray, 'Medieval historiography through the twelfth century: problems and progress of research', *Viator* 5 (1974), 33–59. R. D. Ray, 'Orderic Vitalis on Henry I: theocratic ideology and didactic narrative', in G. H. Shriver (ed.), *Contemporary Reflections on the Medieval Christian Tradition* (Durham NC, 1974), 119-134. A. Gransden, 'Prologues in the historiography of twelfth-century England', reprinted in: A. Gransden, *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England* (London, 1992), 125-51.

*Fortune and Providence*

It will be important for our purposes to determine the historians' understanding of the scope of human agency in the world. As all of the above writers were Christians, their chief frame of enquiry in this matter considered the interrelationship between human conduct and Providence's disposition of events in the world. The term Providence describes both the divine plan for creation, as well as God's disposition of events in time. Amongst the central tenets of Christianity were beliefs that the world had been created by God, and that He disposed all events within it through his Providence.[120] Perhaps the single most influential conceptualisation of Providence is and was to be found in St Augustine's 'textbook' on Christian beliefs, *De ciuitate Dei*.[121] Augustine's exposition sought to demonstrate the follies of those who held one of four views.[122] The first of these erroneous worldviews, as he saw it, was the belief of many, including the Epicureans, that events happened by 'chance', and specifically when that term 'is used of events which have no cause, or at least no cause which depends on any rational principle'.[123] The second error, that made by the Stoics, was the belief that events progressed in an inevitable sequence that was 'independent of the will of God or man', which some called either 'fate' or 'destiny'.[124] The third error was to admit the role of the will of God only in so far as to suggest that He had determined each individual's 'destiny' at birth through the position of the stars.[125] The fourth error, propagated by Cicero, was to accept that there was divine free will and human free will but to reject foreknowledge.[126] Augustine's response resolutely defended and harmonised divine prescience, prophecy, and the freedom of the human will and divine will:

> We [Christians] assert both that God knows all things before they happen and that we do by our free will everything that we feel and know would not happen without our volition. We do not say that everything is fated; in fact we deny that anything happens by destiny (*fato*), in the accepted sense, referring to the conjunction of the stars at the time of conception or birth, has no validity, since it asserts something which has no reality. It is not that we deny a causal order where the will of God prevails; but we do not describe it by the word 'fate', unless perhaps if we understand fate to be derived from 'speak' (*fari*), that is from the act of speaking … Now if there is for God a fixed order of all causes, it does not follow that nothing depends on our free choice. Our wills themselves are in the order of causes, which is, for God, fixed, and is contained in his foreknowledge, since human acts of will are the causes of human activities.[127]

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[120] *DCD*, 179-81; 188-96. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. B. Dombert and A. Kalb, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini. De ciuitate Dei*, 2 vols. (Turnout, 1955), vol. 1, 190-92; 198-219.
[121] *DCD*, 179-81; 188-96. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 190-92; 198-219.
[122] *DCD*, 179-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 190-92.
[123] *DCD*, 179-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 190-92 [fortuita] [quae uel nullas causas habent uel non ex aliquo rationabili ordine uenientes].
[124] *DCD*, 179-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 190-92 [fatalia] [quae praeter Dei et hominum upoluntatem cuiusdam ordinis necessitate contingunt].
[125] *DCD*, 179-80; 188-9. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 190-91[fatalia]; 201-2.
[126] *DCD*, 190-91. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, Ed. vol. 1, 202-4.
[127] *DCD*, 179-196. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 190-211, [(205) nos aduersus … et Deus dicimus omnia scire antequam fiant, et uoluntate nos facere, quidquid a nobis non nisi uolentibus fieri

Therefore, the course of events is both immutable from the omniscient and extratemporal perspective of God, and from a temporal perspective it is responsive to the temporal cause and effect of free human actions. As God is the ultimate and uncaused cause of everything, humanity exists because of Him, and we have only retained any freedom of will after having committed Original Sin against Him because of the grace that He has extended to us.[128] He is the ultimate cause of everything, but for the most part God allows the course of events to proceed according to the sequence of secondary causes, including: free human actions, the free actions of angels and demons, the actions of animals, and the forces of nature.[129] Being omnipotent, He can directly intervene in creation, and does so to deliver His revelation to humanity.[130] Yet, what was believed to be beyond doubt was that God, in His perfection, must necessarily have arranged Providence according to perfect justice, and that there must on that score be a moral patterning to events.[131] Although prophets could recognise some events that were to come because of their abundant prudence and the divine breath that inspired their visions, Augustine asserted that 'God's judgements are inscrutable, and His ways are past searching out'.[132] That is not to say that some later historians did not try.

By the twelfth century the term fortune, *fortuna*, was used to refer to occurrences whose providential justification was not immediately apparent.[133] Arguably, efforts to understand the causal principles by which God had disposed those outcomes were integral – indeed, central - to the wider aim of understanding Him and His providential plan for humanity. The term *fortuna* had a long history stretching back to antiquity, where it had been, variously, a synonym for chance, a term to describe the short-term vicissitudes of fate, and even a deity.[134] Its medieval significance was established by the work of the sixth-century philosopher Boethius, whose *De consolatione philosophiae* held that it was, from a human perspective, the unintended consequence of other causes:

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sentimus et nouimus. Omnia uero fato fieri non dicimus, solet a loquentibus poni, id est in constitutione siderum cum quisque conceptus aut natus est, quoniam res ipsa inaniter asseritur, nihil ualere monstramus. Ordinem autem causarum, ubi uoluntas Dei plurimum potest, neque negamus, neque fati uocabulo nuncupamus, nisi forte ut fatum a fando dictum intellegamus, id est a loquendo … non est autem consequens, ut, si Deo certus est omnium ordo causarum, ideo nihil sit in nostrae uoluntatis arbitrio. Et ipsae quippe nostrae uoluntates in causarum ordine sunt, qui certus est Deo eiusque praescientia continentur, quoniam et humanae uoluntates humanorum operum causae sunt].

[128] Perhaps the clearest articulation of this foundational tenet is: Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, ed. P. Schaff (Buffalo NY, 1887). Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, trans. J. A. Mourant and W. J. Collinge, *Four Anti-Pelagian Writings* (Washington D. C., 1992), 22-92.

[129] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 96-7.

[130] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 96-7.

[131] *DCD*, 196. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 210-11.

[132] *DCD*, 895. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 405-7 [inscrutabilia sunt iudicia eius et inuestigabiles uiae eius]. Augustine is quoting Romans 11:33. See also: Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 275-80. On the contrast between the ignorance of the human intellect and the prescience of prophecy, see: Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 97; 275-280, especially 277-8.

[133] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 270-75.

[134] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', unpublished MPhil dissertation, University of Cambridge (2015), 1-3. See also: D. S. Levene, *Religion in Livy* (Leiden, 1993), 13-15. H. R. Patch, 'The tradition of the goddess Fortuna in roman literature and in the transitional period', *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, 3 (1922), 131-77.

> … [fortune is when] causes are made to concur and flow together by that order which, proceeding with inevitable connection and coming down from its source in Providence, disposes all things in their proper places and times.[135]

*Fortuna* described events that defied human expectation, and thus highlighted areas of human ignorance about God's Providence. It is usually expedient to refer to these outcomes and the providential process that causes them simply as *fortuna*. By the twelfth century, Christianity had long since recognised that events could not always be neatly harmonised at the superficial level with the principle that God's justice was perfect. The widespread perception was that good people sometimes suffered unexpected bad outcomes, and vice versa. To address these epistemic lacunae, Augustine invoked divine inscrutability, urged people to have faith in the justice of all events, and reminded his audience that one's experience of God's temporal justice did not necessarily reflect His final judgement of the soul.[136] Boethius emphasised that Providence served an edificatory and exhortative function.[137] He reasoned that God sometimes permitted the enjoyment of unexpectedly advantageous outcomes as a means to prompt them to reform toward or continue along the path of righteousness.[138] God permitted surprisingly disadvantageous outcomes to occasionally befall humanity as a means of forewarning of the misery that would be the lot of any who turned to the path of iniquity or continued down it.[139] An element of this theory that is almost always overlooked in discussion is that advantageous fortune is still an injustice visited by Providence on humanity because of their sin. In other words, that fortune is only good in so far as humanity are sinful. If that were not so, then it could not be justified. Following his assertions, Boethius found some consolation in the faith that all *fortuna*, whether disadvantageous or not, was good because it exhorted sinful humanity to pursue the good – virtue and, ultimately, oneness with God.[140] Thus, despite the apparent disorder of the temporal world, there is divine plan governed by God, and all outcomes have their cause. The understanding that reached the twelfth century was that, for practical purposes, the disorder we experience has been caused by our sins. As Chapter One shall show, the historians realised that next stage in understanding Providence and its ways of working through us was to determine the exact connection between sin and *fortuna*.

There is often confusion as to the role of fortune in the historians' model or models of causation. In 1966, Robert Hanning wrote in *The Vision of History in Early Britain*.

> The twelfth-century Anglo-Norman historians inherited and propagated the tradition of the exemplary value of history, but we should not automatically assume, as many critics have, that they preserved intact the [early] Christian view of history and Providence … The rhetoric remained the same, but its flowers now sprang from the rich soil of a new historical outlook. The providential view of history was subtly modified to allow a larger role for purely human causation, and to reflect a lively interest in psychological motivation; complementarily, divine providence was impersonalized to a certain extent, and even at times replaced by the concept of fortune's ruling the affairs

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[135] *DCP*, 387. Discussed and quoted in: Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 274.
[136] *DCD*, 895-9. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 405-410.
[137] *DCP*, 338-83.
[138] *DCP*, 338-83.
[139] *DCP*, 338-83.
[140] *DCP*, 374-83.

> of men. Traces of a cyclical view of history appeared, although situated within a larger framework that remained Christian. Most importantly, the exegetical parallel between personal and national levels of history grew markedly weaker, implying a conscious or unconscious revaluation on the part of the historian of the link between the history of salvation and national history.[141]

Arguably, Hanning's now-seminal summary does not adequately distinguish between its comments on the historians' words and its author's view of the ideas that lay behind the text. Certainly, in ideological terms, Providence leaves no room for 'purely human causation'. Historians might note only the secondary, human causes leading to an event, but recognition that God's grace lay behind all actions in the world could not conceivably have abated amongst Christian monks and clerics. This is an example of a belief that lays nigh-uncontrovertibly just beneath the surface of all of the period's historical texts, but whose omission in debate has perhaps fostered mischaracterisations of the shifts in the Anglo-Norman historians' providential worldview.[142] Also in evidence in the above passage is the misnomer that Providence was 'replaced' by the concept of fortune. As we have seen, Boethius had long since accommodated fortune into the Christian understanding of Providence – they were just two words for different manifestations of the same process. Statements such as these, which have not adequately distinguished between shifts in historians' words and the content of the thought that lay behind the words, have perhaps also contributed towards more recent imputations of Epicurean or even modern views of chance to some of the historians.[143]

Rodney Thomson sketched his assessment of William of Malmesbury's understanding of *fortuna* in a series of articles. These have proven seminal, although as I have argued and shall argue further, Thomson was too hasty to impute to William classical or modern notions of 'pure chance'.[144] In Thomson's most recent piece on the matter, William's view is determined to be that, 'God puts pressure on humankind as far as is consistent with free will, but in the face of determined obstinacy withdraws and gives chance free reign'.[145] Insightful studies of *fortuna*'s meaning in historical narratives are few. Sverre Bagge noted shifts in the invocation of the term across the period 968-1158 in the context of the Holy Roman Empire.[146] Bagge rightly recognised that *fortuna* was not conceived of as being separate from Providence.[147] He concluded that, for the author of the *Vita Heinrici Quarti* of c. 1106, and for Otto of Freising in the middle of the twelfth century, it represented authorial deference to the inscrutability of God's Providence.[148] Bagge followed with an analysis of the relationship between ethics, human action, and Providence in

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[141] R. W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York, 1966), 125-6.
[142] Thomson, 'William of Malmesbury's vision of history', 167-8. Gillingham, 'Civilizing the English', 43. Thomson, 'Satire, irony, and humour', 124-5.
[143] Thomson, 'William of Malmesbury's vision of history', 167-8. For my own extended treatment of these missteps, see: Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 22.
[144] Thomson, 'William of Malmesbury's vision of history', 167.
[145] Thomson, 'William of Malmesbury's vision of history', 167-8.
[146] S. Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order of the World in German Historiography: c. 950-1150* (Leiden, 2002).
[147] Bagge, *The Right Order of the World*, 362; 385-6.
[148] Bagge, *The Right Order of the* World, 362; 385-6.

William of Malmesbury's *Historia nouella*, arriving at a similar conclusion.[149] Elisabeth Mégier assessed Otto of Freising and Orderic Vitalis' use of *fortuna* in a shorter study.[150] She similarly noted that it was regarded an incontrovertible truth that all events were part of the divine plan, and hypothesised that Orderic used *fortuna* to narrate situations that did not readily conform to a moral narrative according to his own limited human understanding – the Norman Conquest, for instance, when one great yet sinful people had overtaken another.[151] She struggled to delineate *fortuna*'s role in the *Historia ecclesiastica* beyond the assertion that it alleviated the historian's interpretive burden without denying God's divine justice.[152] Because Mégier found no pattern in its deployment, she concluded that it was 'a more-or-less arbitrary form of linguistic expression'.[153] She contrasted the vagary of its deployment in Orderic's history with what she interpreted to be a more deliberate treatment in Otto of Freising's work.[154] It was assumed that Orderic's imprecision was the consequence of his exclusively Benedictine intellectual formation and supposed remoteness from the schools, the dialectical tradition, and wider currents of debate and enquiry.[155] One specific assertion of Mégier's that Chapter One will contest is that Orderic's milieu did not, at least while he was writing, perceive the contemporary friction between Church and secular authority as challenge to their ideological principles.[156]

Causal frameworks, including conceptions of Providence and fortune, have most recently been evaluated in Emily Winkler's *Royal Responsibility in Anglo-Norman Historical Writing* of 2017.[157] Winkler's analysis centres on William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, John of Worcester, and Geoffrey Gaimar's handling of conquest narratives, arguing that,

> … crisis acts as a laboratory for the study of human nature and thought. In reactions to crisis – both at the time, and in memory years or centuries later – it is possible to discern and to evaluate beliefs about causation, responsibility, history, and the nature of relationships between leaders and followers.[158]

Part of Winkler's attention pertains to the twelfth-century historians' keenness to redeem the English nation and identity from the taint of divine censure manifest in their having been conquered twice during the eleventh century.[159] In this, she pointed to twelfth-century narratives' transfer of causal responsibility away from the collective and onto individual rulers.[160] Citing the influence of Cicero's *De officiis*, Winkler suggested that leaders were deemed to bear both causal and

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[149] S. Bagge, 'Ethics, Politics, and Providence in William of Malmesbury's *Historia nouella*', *Viator* 41 (2010), 113-32, at 129-30.
[150] E. Mégier, 'Fortuna als Kategorie der Geschichtsdeutung im 12. Jahrhundert am Beispiel Ordericus' Vitalis und Ottos von Freising', in E. Mégier (ed.), *Christliche Weltgeschichte im 12. Jahrhundert: Themen, Variationen und Kontraste*, (Frankfurt, 2010), 203-26.
[151] Megier, 'Fortuna', 57; 60-61.
[152] Megier, 'Fortuna', 57; 60-61.
[153] Megier, 'Fortuna', 69.
[154] Megier, 'Fortuna', 67-70.
[155] Megier, 'Fortuna', 60-61.
[156] Megier, 'Fortuna', 69.
[157] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*.
[158] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 4.
[159] See especially: Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 239-64.
[160] See especially: Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 235-8.

moral responsibility.[161] That is, the agency to do something – causal - and the obligation to do something - moral.[162] This distinction and her assertion of contemporary intentionalist theology's influence on the milieu should not obscure the important point that, for William and Henry at least, it was inexcusable for a leader to fall short of their causal and not merely moral responsibility.[163] In other words, leaders were judged squarely on the effectiveness of proper deeds, and failure could not be excused by good intentions. Leaders were held to what seemed like an impossible standard, and even those who were praised had not met it.[164] The present study aims to delve *deeper* into the ideology that lay behind the distribution of responsibility. We shall also investigate the justifications that lay behind the high standards expected of kings, as we dedicate close attention to the circumstances – contingencies - that often precluded the fulfilment of responsibility. Winkler was careful to affirm that explanations according to human action and fortune were not to reject that all events were disposed by God's Providence.[165] Yet, she also followed scholars in assuming that fortune evoked classical notions of chance, or at least epistemic uncertainty and divine inscrutability.[166]

[161] Cicero, *De Officciis*, ed. and trans. W. Miller, *On Duties* (Cambridge MA, 1913). Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 31-3.
[162] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 9.
[163] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 105; 138.
[164] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 145-7.
[165] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 108-9.
[166] Winkler does not define the concept of fortune anywhere, but for her most resolved explanation see: Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 108-9.

*Julius Caesar*

The Roman soldier, lawyer, politician, general, and eventual dictator Julius Caesar requires little historical introduction. For the present purpose, our concern lies with later memory of his personage, leadership, and two of his military campaigns. The two campaigns that influenced twelfth-century Anglo-Norman ideology were his invasions of Britain, 55-54 BC, and the Great Roman Civil War, 49-45 BC, which he fought against the Roman Senate and the coalition of the Roman *optimates* led by his arch-rival, Pompey Magnus. The memorialisation and retelling of his invasions of Britain will be discussed fully in respect to specific points raised in Chapter Two. Of more general consequence in the twelfth century was the memory of his prosecution of the Great Roman Civil War. The dominant tradition was the then-ubiquitous *Pharsalia* of Lucan, a historical epic of ten books that narrated the conflict and its causes.[167] Lucan lived a short life, 39-65 AD, during the reign of Nero, and was vociferously anti-imperial in public life. He joined an ill-fated plot against the emperor, and upon its discovery Nero compelled him to commit suicide. These dire personal circumstances influenced his keen interest in the political events and cosmic mechanisms that determined the limits of each human's agency in the world. In *Pharsalia*, he reflected on tyranny's deprivation of the liberty to pursue and attain happiness, the work's guiding theme. As he blamed Nero's corruption for his and others' inability to advance the Roman nation, the *patria*, he took as his great work's subject matter the fateful circumstances that had first brought the republic under the control of one man, Julius Caesar. Lucan recognised that human agency is at all times limited by the necessity of fate - that is, the interconnected web of causes which has given us existence. He realised that it was the unexpected conjunction of these causes, fortune, that often rendered our best intentions futile:

> Countless javelins were hurled, but with different desires: some pray to deal wounds, and others to bury their points in the ground and keep their hands unstained; but chance and haste are supreme, and uncertain fortune (*fortuna*) makes who she will guilty.[168]

Lucan lamented that fate had left him unable to render service to his country. In equal measure, it captivated and terrified him that Caesar's ambition, to rule over Rome as king, had almost been realised despite the seemingly overwhelming obstacles that had stood in his path. *Pharsalia* narrates how Caesar's supreme good fortune had empowered him to win the war. It relays that he had pledged himself to *fortuna* when crossing the Rubicon in 49 BC, and had thereafter *almost* always enjoyed utmost good fortune.[169] Lucan understood the civil war as a time of

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[167] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, ed. and trans. J. D. Duff, *The Civil War* (Cambridge MA, 1928).
[168] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 404-5 [Spargitur innumerum diversis missile votis: | Volnera pars optat, pars terrae figere tela | Ac puras servare manus. Rapit omnia casus, | Atque incerta facit quos volt fortuna nocentes]. For discussion, see: M. L. Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1985), vol. 1, 261.
[169] The two famous exceptions being his assassination and his failed crossing of the Adriatic, which shall be introduced in detail in a later chapter, but see: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 276-91.

*metacosmesis*, a destruction and recasting of the whole cosmic order, but could ascribe no higher meaning to it than that.[170] As he saw it, Caesar's fate had been to consolidate the republic and ready it for empire, disenfranchising pro-republic patriots, like himself ,who fortune had trampled under the necessity of that fate. Lucan's lamentations for his beloved *patria* and his despair for the course of fate contrasts sharply with the providential perspective of later Christian historians. For the early fifth-century Christian historian Orosius, Caesar and his family had effected the *pax Romana*, whose providential purpose had been to prepare the world for the Incarnation of Christ and to receive His divine revelation.[171] In this light, God's empowerment of Caesar, by means of disposing good fortune to his temporal advantage, looked rather less arbitrary.

Arguably, some of the historians might have believed that a further major providential purpose lay behind God's empowerment of England's kings in a similar manner. This argument unfolds in stages throughout the following chapters, but the underlying context is that the historians of the period tended to compare each king with Julius Caesar. In some cases, it was deemed appropriate to characterise a king as a 'New Caesar'. The meaning of these comparisons and characterisations has arguably been overlooked because they have not been considered in light of the historians' wider objectives and ideological preoccupations. In the late-eleventh and the first half of the twelfth century, Julius Caesar's fame was unmatched, in part because he was remembered as history's most powerful secular leader.[172] The major Alexandrine romances had not yet appeared, while *Pharsalia*'s ubiquity in learned Latin culture kept Caesar's example fresh in the mind and close at hand.[173]

It is surprising given Caesar's prominence in the literature of the period that relatively few dedicated analyses have appeared. There has been no dedicated study of Caesar's image and role across medieval historical writing in England. Indeed, and more surprising still, in the words of Almut Suerbaum, 'there are no comprehensive studies covering the reception of Caesar (that is, in any capacity) *in medieval Europe*'.[174] The expansive titles of a few ageing studies bely their more distinct foci: Jeanette Beer's *A Medieval Caesar* predominantly treats one medieval author's synthesis of the *Li Fet des Romains* from its classical sources, while Karl Christ's *Caesar: Annäherungen an einen Diktator* nearly omits mention of the Middle Ages altogether.[175] A more fulsome yet more outdated survey is Friedrich Gundolf's 1903 Ph.D. dissertation, which focussed squarely on German literature.[176] Portions of Gundolf's work appeared in an English translation as *The Mantle of*

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[170] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 6-9. See also: P. Roche, 'Righting the reader: conflagration and civil war in Lucan's *De bello ciuili* [*Pharsalia*]', *Scholia* 14 (2005), 52-71.
[171] Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, especially 315-7.
[172] For instances of the regard for Caesar's power, see, for instance: *HA*, 36-7. *HE*, vol. 5, 214-5.
[173] Most notably: Walter of Châtillon, *Alexandreis*, trans. D. Townsend (Philadelphia PA, 1996).
[174] A. Suerbaum, 'The Middle Ages', in M. Griffin (ed.), *A Companion to Julius Caesar* (Oxford, 2009), 317-334. Emphasis my own.
[175] J. Beer, *A Medieval Caesar* (Geneva, 1976). K. Christ, *Caesar: Annäherungen an einen Diktator* (Munich, 1994).
[176] F. Gundolf [Gundelfinger], 'Caesar in der deutschen Literatur', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Berlin (1903). Published as *Palaestra,* 33 (Berlin, 1904); reprinted (New York, 1967).

*Caesar*.[177] The work suggested that Caesar 'was first a mythical figure, then a magical name, and only became a historical person with John of Salisbury in the twelfth century'.[178] Gundolf's thesis is too uncompromising and given to hyperbole – Bede for one certainly took an interest in the historical Caesar.[179] Gundolf was preoccupied with continental sources but did cite some of the twelfth-century English thinkers who demonstrated an interest in Caesar.[180] More recently, Almut Suerbaum's chapter for Blackwell's *A Guide to Julius Caesar*, titled 'The Middle Ages', aspired to a comprehensive overview of Caesar's medieval reception in the space of seventeen pages.[181] Unsurprisingly, Suerbaum tailored the piece to reflect her own specialism in German vernacular literature, reasoning that it reflects trends mirrored in other vernaculars.[182] There is no Caesarean equivalent to George Cary's excellent *The Medieval Alexander*, which itself relegates any comparison with Caesar to a few footnotes.[183]

Despite the paucity of dedicated studies, Caesar's perennial recurrence in the historical narratives of the period has often attracted comment. John Gillingham has viewed William of Malmesbury's sustained characterisation of William Rufus as a 'New Caesar' favourably, and has cited it on more than one occasion in an attempt to rehabilitate the king's image.[184] Gillingham delivered an extended version of his analysis in a paper titled 'William Rufus and the Soul of Julius Caesar' at the 'William of Malmesbury and his Legacy' conference, held in Oxford during summer 2015. There, he spoke of needing to take Malmesbury's words about the king at face value, and to disregard the conclusions of earlier scholars that hyperbolic comparison to Caesar articulated a subversive anti-Rufus agenda. Gillingham went on to suggest that for Malmesbury, the virtue of magnanimity was Caesar's preeminent attribute. These views have since appeared in print in 'The Ironies of History: William of Malmesbury's Views of William II and Henry I' of 2017. Slightly fuller evaluations may be found in George Meredith Logan's 1967 unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 'Lucan in England: The Influence of the *Pharsalia* on English Letters from the Beginnings through the Sixteenth Century', and in the work whose ironic interpretation Gillingham contested, Haahr's 'William of Malmesbury's Roman Models: Suetonius and Lucan'.[185] Outside of narrative histories, Hans Liebeschütz has compared Alexander and Caesar as they are represented in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*.[186] Liebeschütz concludes that 'For John of Salisbury, Caesar, like Alexander,

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[177] F. Gundolf, *The Mantle of Caesar*, trans. J. W. Hartmann (London, 1929).
[178] T. Barnes, 'The First Emperor: The View of Late Antiquity', in M. Griffin (ed.), *A Companion to Julius Caesar* (Oxford, 2009), 277. Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 20-21.
[179] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 20-23.
[180] Gundolf, *The Mantle of Caesar*, 83-6.
[181] Suerbaum, 'The Middle Ages', 317-34.
[182] Suerbaum, 'The Middle Ages', 317.
[183] G. Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge, 1956), 267; 269; 310; 316; 318.
[184] J. Gillingham, *William II: The Red King* (London, 2015), 12.
[185] G. M. Logan, 'Lucan in England: the influence of the *Pharsalia* on English letters from the beginnings through the sixteenth century', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University (1967), 54-5. J. G. Haahr, 'William of Malmesbury's Roman models: Suetonius and Lucan ', in A. S. Bernardo and S. Levin (eds.), *The Classics in the Middle Ages: Papers of the Twentieth Annual Conference of the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies* (Binghampton NY, 1990), 165-73.
[186] H. Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury* (London, 1950), 71-73.

is a man of genius whose greatness caused him to strive for the wrong object'.[187] There has also been comment on Caesar's portrayal and role in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*.[188] Given its restricted scope, existing scholarship is only of tangential value for our purposes here.

[187] Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism*, 73.
[188] In addition to the aforementioned studies on *fortuna*'s role in the *HRB*: K. McLoone, 'Caesar's Sword, Proud Britons, and Galfridian Myths of Discontinuity', in J. F. Nagy (ed.), *Writing Down the Myths* (Turnhout, 2013), 181-200.

*Methodological and contextual notes on the present study*

The present study is the culmination of a research trajectory that began with my undergraduate dissertation, submitted to Aberystwyth University in 2014, titled 'Antiquity in Orderic Vitalis' *Historia ecclesiastica*'.[189] There, I contended that Orderic's narrative of Julius Caesar's conquest of Normandy might have been an original composition intended as a tacit commentary on the events of the narrative that bracketed it - Henry I's campaign against the Norman Rebellion of the late 1110s.[190] If so, the sequence resonated as a celebration of Caesar's, and hence Henry's, establishment of order and civilisation for the benefit of peoples who had been trampled under the heel of tyrants.[191] My continued interest in the medieval reception and adaptation of ancient history and ideas led to my MPhil dissertation on 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon'.[192] There, I made the nascent case for the 'model' of fortune's operation, whose emergence raised many more questions than could be answered at the time. Chapter One of the present study endeavours to answer these important questions so that the model and its implications can be understood as fully as possible. Chapter One of this work also distils the conclusions of a more comprehensive case study of William of Malmesbury's use of *fortuna*, the research for which I undertook as part of the present project. That article, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', appeared in print in 2018.[193]

These earlier projects reinforced my regard for evaluating medieval historical works, first and foremost, as literary compositions, but as literary compositions that were constrained within, and which therefore betray, a whole gamut of contemporary preoccupations, ideas, and agendas. Gabrielle Spiegel has called this the 'social logic of the text'.[194] As a means to draw as close as is possible to the text's meaning, the reconstruction of that social logic can only ever be imperfect, but that should not dissuade. As the authors of recent efforts to reconstruct some of the ideas that underpinned historical writing have noted, the varying nature of historical texts and their origins means that there cannot be a unified prescribed method towards this end.[195] Conclusions need to rest on as secure an evidentiary foundation as can be derived from what has come down to us from the period, balanced against the scope of each study. Some scholars thereby choose to restrict the breadth of their interjection so as to ensure it is sited on as firm an epistemic footing as is

[189] T. S. Forster, 'Antiquity in Orderic Vitalis' *Historia ecclesiastica*', unpublished undergraduate dissertation, Aberystwyth University (2014).
[190] Forster, 'Antiquity in Orderic Vitalis', 26-33.
[191] Forster, 'Antiquity in Orderic Vitalis', 31-3.
[192] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon'.
[193] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*'.
[194] G. M. Spiegel, 'History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 65:1 (1990), 59-86; reprinted in G. M. Spiegel, *The Past As Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore, 1997), at 3-28.
[195] Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, 18-20.

possible.[196] Others situate discussion of a wider range of texts within a commendable reconstruction of the social logic, but have scarcely chased the meaning of the textual trends they observe beyond demarcated categories of scholarly debate.[197] This latter group of studies often steer closer to describing the *how* than to revealing the *why*.

This is a study of the thought of those who wrote major historical narratives. There is now a broad acceptance amongst scholars that historians were not narrowly concerned with ascertaining an unbending account of the literal passage of events. Rather, historical writing is now properly understood as a panoptic reflection of a much broader range of contemporary beliefs, values, and preoccupations. This is not to say that medieval historians were unconcerned with truth. I argue in Chapter One that historical investigation was a vehicle for discerning the truth of the divine patterning of events and ascertaining an objective ethical model. Truth is not necessarily confined to the physical – there are also a whole range of metaphysical truths and, for believers, there is truth in religion and above all in God. The truth of the manifest physical world cannot be denied, but it is not the whole truth. As such, it does not follow that the artifice and selectiveness of historical narratives are exclusively the symptoms of contemporary worldly agendas and/or improper analytical rigour. To at least the same degree, they are indicative of efforts to accentuate the broader and thus higher truths that events revealed. It is also my conviction that rhetorical and grammatical models and precepts were a means of articulating truth, but do not in themselves account for the form and content of historical narratives.[198] They were instruments of the author's *historia*, not its substance. It is that *historia* and the milieu of ideas out of which it was synthesised that concern the present study.

Chapter One, 'Reckoning Fortune', evaluates the historians' use of empirical testimony to reckon the operation of fortune according to God's Providence and attempt to determine a causal relationship between its reverses and human action. It considers a range of practical and theoretical considerations that would have faced the historians and their audiences, and continue to face scholars interested in determining the ideas that underpinned the histories. It closes with an extended consideration of the historians' views on the challenges before communal unity and spiritual advancement.

Chapter Two, 'Caesar and 'New Caesars'', explores the reasons for the historians' extensive interest in the historical figure Julius Caesar and with specific reference to narrations of William the Conqueror's exploits it assesses their commitment to the typology of the 'New Caesar'. The New Caesar type was a device that the historians and their immediate predecessors, who wrote in the wake of the Norman Conquest of 1066, frequently deployed to characterise contemporary leaders.

[196] For instance: Sønnesyn confined his analysis to William of Malmesbury's *GR*.
[197] For instance: Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*.
[198] The best overview guide to which is: Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*.

Chapters One and Two also lay the contextual foundations for the remainder of the study, which turns to an extraordinary ideological development that arose from spanning the two themes.

Chapter Three, '*Fortuna Caesaris*', considers the historians' ideological responses to King William II Rufus' reign. The histories tell us that Rufus' good fortune seemed to defy all conventional expectations, and that he was an unusually Caesarean king in his manner and conduct. It shows that Julius Caesar had been famed for his own good fortune, *fortuna Caesaris*, and contends that the historians sighted a tantalising restorative opportunity in Rufus' 'outdoing' of Caesar's fortune.

Chapter Four, 'A Satanic Caesar?', ponders whether the Satanic Caesar type, which rose to such explicit prominence in Early Modern literature, might have been prototyped in the historians' works. It evaluates the literary and ideological precedents out of which the historians might have conveyed the tacit argument that some of their leaders were metaphorical or even literal personifications of the Devil. It couches this incipient typology and its consequences in the theory of the model exposited in Chapter One.

Chapter Five, 'Paradise Regained', asks whether any of the historians might have taken the ideas examined in chapters One, Three, and Four to their logical conclusions. It considers their sketches of secular leaders who were able to remove themselves and their adherents from exposure to fortune and contingency for some transitory period. It closes with an in-depth analysis of the climax of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, demonstrating how these ideas were harmonised with scriptural prophecy concerning the coming of the Antichrist, the Second Coming of Christ, and the salvation of the elect. It brings forth new evidence to suggest that Henry believed he had lived to see the passage of some of these events, which gave way to the literal and permanent restoration of a paradisal state on earth

# CHAPTER ONE: RECKONING FORTUNE

Early in the twelfth century, several historians began incorporating the term *fortuna* into their explanatory paradigm. Collectively, it appears hundreds of times in their works and the works of their successors. While this group were not the first historians of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman domains to have used the term, they were the first to make frequent and substantive reference to it since at least Dudo of St Quentin, who had mentioned it six times in his *De moribus* (which is approximately 6,100 lines of Latin text in J. Lair's edition).[1] Of their more recent forebears' works, *fortuna* featured in the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* (approximately 700 lines of Latin in the Oxford Medieval Texts – OMT – edition) and the *Gesta Guillelmi* (approximately 2,600 lines of Latin in the OMT edition) only once each, and in the *Encomium Emma reginae* (approximately 850 lines of Latin in A. Campbell's edition) only twice.[2] The first of the historians to use it extensively was Orderic Vitalis. Orderic, although he had not used it at all during his 'historical apprenticeship' spent redacting the *Gesta normannorum ducum* (approximately 6,500 lines of Latin in the OMT edition, although Robert of Torigni further expanded the work after Orderic had redacted William of Jumièges' efforts), yet he did use it thirty-two times in his mature work, the *Historia ecclesiastica* (approximately 32,000 lines of Latin in the OMT edition).[3] William of Malmesbury mentioned it upwards of fifty times across his *Gesta regum anglorum* (approximately 12,500 lines of Latin in OMT), *Gesta pontificum anglorum* (approximately 9,800 lines of Latin in OMT), and *Historia nouella* (approximately 2,000 lines of Latin in OMT).[4] Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia anglorum* (approximately 12,500 lines of Latin in OMT) mentions it fourteen times.[5] The count is eighteen in

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[1] Dudo of St Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, ed. J. Lair, 144; 158; 163; 187; 222; 245.
[2] Guy of Amiens, *Carmen*, 30. William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi*, 172. *Encomium Emma reginae*, 16; 48.
[3] *HE*, vol. 2, 28; 178; 220; 260.
*HE*, vol. 3, 88; 100; 134; 160; 324.
*HE*, vol. 4, 52; 104; 120; 212; 254; 290.
*HE*, vol. 5, 94; 172; 182; 214; 238; 256.
*HE*, vol. 6, 50; 146; 154; 242; 302; 372; 374; 498; 514; 522; 544. See also: Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 7; 13.
[4] Thomson, 'Satire, irony, and humour', 125; 125 n. 52. Thomson's list is reproduced here, page references have been updated to the Oxford Medieval Texts editions. Bold = Fortune's wheel. Underlined = Fortune as dice player:
*GP*, vol. 1, 142; p. 160; 212; 254; 288; 338; 420; 500; **508**; 560; 578.
*GR*, vol. 1, 19; 20; 20; **26**; 40; 66; 68; 76; **114**; 154; 200; 202; 222; 226; 272; 304; 318; 324; 340; 352; 368; **416**; **464**; 474; 498; 576; 602; 676; 682; 704; 706; 718; 722; 760.
Additionally, here follows my own list of William's deployments of *fortuna* in his *Historia nouella*:
*HN*, 6; 10; 32; 38; 46; 60; 68; 80; 92; 98; 104 [twice]; 106; 112; 114; 118; 126. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 30.
[5] *HA*, 62 [derived from Paul the Deacon, see: *HA*, 62 n. 198]; 122; 238; 240; 262; 264; 276; 310; 330; 564; 608; 722 [twice]; 746. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 56.

the *Gesta Stephani* (approximately 3,800 lines of Latin in OMT).[6] The trend suggests that the admission of *fortuna* into the explanatory lexicon cannot be attributed solely to the personal experiences or tastes of individual authors. Rather, as I intend to show in what follows, that it was a symptom of some wider impulse or impulses to refine the terms by which the passage of events could be related to the Providence of God. I seek to elucidate what those impulses were and contribute toward better understanding the historians' projects. I argue that these four historians' expositions of the workings of fortune were predicated on sincere empirical enquiry into the complexities of Providence's disposition of events and their correspondence to human conduct. In this light, it is imperative to regard their task as an investigation in theology and ethics, whose conclusions they conveyed through the medium of their broader historical project. As such, it would be disingenuous to assess the term *fortuna*'s proliferation as a token of authorial scepticism about the moral patterning of events in the world, or as the ephemera of literary or rhetorical embroidery.

This chapter is divided into three sections that deal with aspects of these four historians' engagement with the idea of fortune. The first section, *Studying the erring world*, examines what the historians tell us about their effort to better understand fortune and contingency, and by extension Providence, by means of empirical observation of testimony. The second section, *The 'model' of fortune*, proceeds on an author-by-author basis to examine their findings, and to posit that their common conclusions can be described as a model of fortune's operation. It also considers the various impulses that might have brought each of them to the same task at broadly the same time. The final section, *The 'model' atomised*, evaluates the theoretical coherence of the model and probes, through its sub-divisions, certain of the model's apparent implications, blind-spots, and its harmony or lack thereof with other theological tenets. This chapter is concerned with the model of fortune and how it came to be, while chapters Three, Four, and Five indicate and explain some of the ideological ends to which it was then turned.

[6] *GS*, 7; 46; 80; 96 [twice]; 146; 174; 176 [twice]; 182; 188; 190; 196; 198; 224 [three times]; 234. An incomplete version of this list appeared in: Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 7.

*Studying the erring world*

If the emergence of fortune as an explanatory tool is to be accounted significance beyond the assessments of scholarship to date, then it is necessary to show that its invocation was predicated on more than a concession of epistemic intractability. To this end, it is worth considering both the historians' methods of enquiry and what they actually tell us about the foci of their investigations. The first of these considerations is straightforward enough to determine – historical enquiry is by nature based on empirical determination. The term empirical here refers to the primary means by which knowledge is sought. The practice of historical writing was indebted to observation of the world, whether at first hand, or as mediated through testimony detailing what had been observed or otherwise discerned. This contrasted with rational branches of scholasticism and other normative studies, whose exponents primarily sought knowledge via logical deduction.[7] By contemporary definition, History was distinct from fable or myth in that it was concerned with events that were believed to have actually happened, and with people who had actually existed.[8] For the twelfth-century historian, the act of composing an internally coherent written narrative facilitated the analysis of past events. The analysis of past events could, alongside other purposes, help determine those past figures whose actions had been most worthy of praise and blame, account for the outcomes of past events, and shine light on obscure origins. Arguably, though, the highest end it served was revelation of the previously inscrutable mysteries of God's creation. One route to attaining an understanding of God was to understand His creation. The investigation of the past in service of such a lofty end was virtuous in and of itself, and even more so when that empirical insight was given narrative form and communicated to an audience. Yet, there is a distinction to be drawn between those who might read their present moral and theological convictions into the past, and those who allowed testimony to guide them towards truth. The historians determinately identified with the latter approach. Take, for instance, the sentiment of the oft-quoted prologue to Book 3 of William of Malmesbury's *Historia*:

> I am undertaking to unravel the trackless maze of events and occurrences that befell in England, with the aim that posterity should not be ignorant of these matters through our lack of care, it being worthwhile to learn the changefulness of fortune and the mutability of the human lot, by God's permission or bidding. Therefore, as we men of the present day severely and rightly blame our predecessors, who since Bede have left no record of themselves and their doings, I, who have set myself to remove this disgrace from us, may fairly claim the kindly favour of my readers if they judge alright.[9]

[7] Anselm best example. Also note caveats e.g. Peter the Chanter.
[8] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 433-4.
[9] *HN*, 80–1 [inextricabilem laberinthum rerum et negotiorum quae acciderunt in Anglia aggredior evoluere; ea causa, ne per nostram incuriam lateat posteros, cum sit opere pretium cognoscere volubilitatem fortunae statusque humani mutabilitatem, Deo dumtaxat permittente vel iubente. Itaque quia moderni non mediocriter et merito reprehendunt predecessores nostros, qui nec sui nec suorum post Bedam ullam reliquerunt

The censoriousness William felt towards his predecessors for having failed to leave behind analyses predicated upon plausible testimony is clear but what, over and above all else, mandated the considerable effort that he undertook to rectify the situation? What had William *most* hoped he would find in and/or be able to discern from an extant post-Bedan historical record? In his own words, he tells us that it was 'worthwhile to learn the changefulness of fortune and the mutability of the human lot...'.[10] Some might argue that that this statement was the empty recapitulation of a commonplace. In that case, William's words could be understood as a nod to the traditions of the genre, which since antiquity had mused in pithy generalities on the role of fortune in the world. However, based on what he actually says, it seems improbable that he would go to such lengths to reinforce the same generic precept that he had already stated. Arguably, he hoped he could learn something *new* about fortune by studying the course of past events. In that case, William sought to record the events of his age and rectify the past's failure to leave behind testimony because, by those means, he expected to '*learn*' and understand the hidden mechanisms of Providence that were characterised as fortune.[11] Humanity rose and fell with the permission or at the bidding of God, he says, but his formulation also strikes as reflexive. His own project was to be undertaken with the permission *or at the bidding* of God. William perhaps countenanced that he was responding to a divine calling to understand this aspect of cosmic rationality. Certainly, there was nothing sinful about pursuing understanding of creation in this manner – any understanding that emanated from such a study was only a threat to faith in the sense that God, by His grace, had unveiled something of the divine truth. Faith in truth is necessarily inferior to understanding or sure knowledge of that truth. Of course, apprehending the cosmic wisdom would bring pragmatic, secular utility in addition to any perceived spiritual benefit. Understanding fortune also helped to 'unravel the trackless maze of events' in this life, i.e. identify the causes of (relatively) base events about which a historian or his audience cared.

William seems to have realized that historical enquiry was a means particularly well-suited to the task of unravelling divine rationality. His starting point would have been the precepts advanced by the sixth-century philosopher Boethius, who had shown how the use of terms such as chance (*casus*), fate (*fatum*), and fortune (*fortuna*) could helpfully describe aspects of the operation of Providence.[12] Boethius had reasoned that fate described the course of Providence as it unfolded within time, while chance and fortune were 'the unexpected event of [providentially ordered] concurring causes among things done for some purpose'.[13] Cicero had earlier explained that *fortuna* was a descriptor for events whose proximate causes were unknown, but Boethius' formulation emphasised that all things, whether their proximate causes were known to humanity or not, were

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memoriam, ego, qui a nobis hanc proposui summouere infamiam, debeo apud lectores bona, si recte iudicabunt, pacisci gratiam].

[10] *HN*, 80–1 [sit opere pretium cognoscere volubilitatem fortunae statusque humani mutabilitatem].
[11] *HN*, 80–1 [cognoscere].
[12] Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, 60. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 270-81, especially 274-6.
[13] *DCP*, 387.

part of the Providential plan.[14] When unified with the tenet that God was perfectly just, Boethius' affirmation that all events were disposed by Providence served as a counterpoint to any who cited apparent injustices as a means to question the justice of God's Providence. Whenever Christian providential orthodoxy came under attack thereafter, it could retort that all events were indeed just, but some only by criteria or evidence that escaped human understanding. Ostensibly, this defence was robust enough for there to have been little apparent need in the course of the intervening centuries to elaborate on the Boethian precepts. At any rate, fortune and the hidden mysteries of providence did not emerge as a popular theme of normative study.[15] Nevertheless, there were certain questions that Boethius had only been able to answer in part, and others that he had been unable or unwilling to tackle at all. For instance, his precepts could not determine what caused individual reverses of fortune. He had reasoned that fortune had been introduced into the world as a consequence of original sin, and in that sense had articulated that original sin accounted for all subsequent reverses of fortune.[16] As a deliberately reductive statement of precept, this was logically coherent. Yet, from a practical perspective, its elision of the causal chain rendered it near-useless. In the same way that original sin was a distant cause of all subsequent sins, there were also any number of more immediate secondary causes, and, by extension, any number of further instances of sin. One could correctly reason that fortune was caused by sin, but in order to understand why a *specific* reverse of fortune had been prompted, a more detailed understanding of the secondary causes and other temporal circumstances was needed. Being a practical question, this was circumstantial, and so demanded empirical observation of sins and reverses across a temporal span in order for any pattern to become apparent. The more complete the testimony on which this inquiry was based, the greater the likelihood that coherent patterns could be determined. Twelfth-century historical writing recorded everything that was necessary to extrapolate such patterns. Whether by coincidence or design, it demonstrated a penchant for recording the virtues and vices of protagonists. It also fell to the historian to record reverses that had occurred months, years, decades, and even centuries ago. What remained was the discernment of the historian, the ability to connect apparent cause and effect even when faced with a morass of testimony that might at first appear like a 'trackless maze'.[17]

Empirically-driven enquiry of the kind that William proposed was confronted by numerous challenges. Contemporary understanding held that any information derived from sensory perception remained hostage to the usual human imperfections and frailties, as well as a host of extrinsic dangers. Augustine had reasoned that humans, like demons, were excluded from the divine insight that God shared with the good angels.[18] As humans were not privy to prudential certitude, they were left with scriptural revelation, sensory perception, and reason as their only

[14] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 270-73.
[15] Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 279-80.
[16] Expressed succinctly at: *DCP*, 174-9. See also: *DCD*, 522-4. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 571-6.
[17] *HN*, 80-1 [inextricabilem laberinthum].
[18] *DCD*, 367-8. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 397.

means to understand cosmic rationality and so derive a basis for postulating what might occur in future.[19] Scripture and reason were ill-suited to unfolding various aspects of the whole, yet the human senses in the fallen state were vulnerable to all sorts of deceptions and misapprehensions, a weakness that was exacerbated by the constant flux of the lapsarian world.[20] Demons possessed superior sensory acuity to humans, and in part from this there emerged a mistrust of prognostication and the uncovering of the otherwise hidden by empirical means.[21] Such activities could be associated with demonic confidence tricks – the deceit and exploitation of people to do ungodly bidding.[22] Historians were sometimes lambasted for propagating demonic or otherwise ungodly interests, a charge that Gerald of Wales levelled explicitly against Geoffrey of Monmouth.[23] There were also more mundane human factors that complicated the use of empirical testimony. Evidence can be corrupted through primary or secondary error, whether at the point of sensory experience, record, or propagation. When testimony was available at all, then, it needed careful handling, especially if it were to be used to help recommend courses of action, or as a component of an effort to understand the God and His creation.

A common suggestion is that a theologically-conservative outlook predominated during the first half of the twelfth century that, when confronted with the inexplicable, retreated to faith and divine inscrutability, and hailed exceptional phenomena as either miraculous or demonic.[24] Supposedly, threats to this outlook crystallised in the form of scepticism, naturalising explanations, and growing confidence of the rational theologians.[25] It seems fairly secure that some sceptics, in their disillusionment with orthodox tenets, questioned whether God had any care to govern the world according to a moral order.[26] Also, that renewed attention was paid through the course of the twelfth century towards the secondary causes of things, which often included natural forces.[27] Further, that the dialectical approaches of the schools and nascent universities increasingly diminished the centrality of scripture and signification in the quest for truth. Traditionalists defended the Augustinian orthodoxy by consigning records of mysterious phenomena, volumes of hagiography, miscellanies that lent verisimilitude and some degree of authority to accounts of the activity of demons or ambiguous beings, and historical narratives that emphasised the worldly signs of God's Providence.[28] On account of all of this, twelfth-century historians have generally been pigeonholed as exponents of a beleaguered conservatism that saw virtue in their deference to

[19] See discussion in: C. S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2007), 23-67.
[20] *DCD*, 368. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 397.
[21] Watkins, *History and the Supernatural*, 52-3. See, for instance: *HE*, vol. 6, 226-7.
[22] Watkins, *History and the Supernatural*, 55-61.
[23] Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, trans. L. Thorpe, *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales* (London, 1978), 63-209, at 117-8.
[24] See, for instance: Watkins, *History and the Supernatural*, 23-24.
[25] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 40-60. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural.*
[26] See, for example, the scepticism attributed to King William II Rufus: Eadmer, *Historia nouorum*, 102; 116-17.
[27] Watkins, *History and the Supernatural*, 27-38, especially 33-5. Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, 105.
[28] For instance: Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, ed. and trans. M. L. R. James, rev. R. A. B. Mynors and C. N. L. Brooke, *De Nugis Curialium: Courtiers' Trifles* (Oxford, 1983). William of Malmesbury, *Vita Sanctorum*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, *Saints' Lives* (Oxford, 2002).

scripture and faith.[29] It is said that the historians' attempts to establish moral patterning behind the complexities of life in the world ran up against inevitable limits, identified by their expressions of faith, attribution of events to active divine intervention, and recourse to the Boethian appeal to inscrutability invoked by the term fortune.[30] William of Malmesbury's well-known reference to the 'trackless maze' has frequently been cited to substantiate this view of the historians' concession of explanatory defeat, as has a notable prefatory statement of Orderic Vitalis:[31]

> I firmly believe, from interpretation of earlier writers (*ex conectura preteritorum*), that in time someone will come with greater understanding than myself, and greater capacity for interpreting the various events taking place on earth, who will perhaps derive something from my writings and those of others like me, and will graciously insert this in his chronicle or history for the information of future generations.[32]

Arguably, Orderic's words, and the historians' endeavour, were not as humble as they can at first appear. As recent work has shown, Orderic did not distance himself from responsibility for interpreting the past as much as has sometimes been assumed.[33] Superficially humble statements of deference to whom he termed *studiosi* did not refer to scholars in ivory towers, but to his own monastic brethren, and indeed to all *lectores* of his work.[34] Without this interjection, we might have imagined Orderic's contemporary Bernard of Chartres, the famed Neo-Platonist philosopher, as precisely the kind of *studiosus* whom Orderic had in mind. Bernard encapsulated the period's prevailing attitude to learning in his claim that he was 'standing on the shoulders of giants'.[35] Arguably, Bernard's statement is a useful prism for understanding the ostensible humility of men like Orderic. Its logic is that even if one was of lesser stature or possessed no greater acuity of vision than earlier authorities upon whom they depended, they could still hope to see further than the greats. In other words, that progress might be incremental, but it was still progress. This masterstroke of false humility seems to capture the tone of the *HE*'s prologue, the opening lines of which speak volumes about Orderic's ambition:

> Our predecessors in their wisdom have studied all the ages of the erring world from the earliest times, have recorded useful and injurious contingency (*contingentia*) as a warning to others, and, in their constant eagerness to profit future generations, have added their own writings to those of the past. This we see achieved by Moses and Daniel and other writers of the Hagiographa; this we find in Dares Phrygius and Pompeius Trogus and other historians of the gentiles, this too we perceive in Eusebius and the *De Ormesta Mundi* of Orosius and Bede the Englishman and Paul of Monte Cassino and other ecclesiastical writers. I study their narratives with delight, I praise and admire the

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[29] For instance: Watkins, *History and the Supernatural*, 23-7, especially 25-7.
[30] For instance: Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence', 129-31.
[31] *HN*, 80-81 [inextricabilem laberinthum].
[32] *HE*, vol. 1, 130-33 [Firmiter ex coniectura preteritorum opinor, quod exurget quis me multo perspicacior, ac ad adagandos multimodarum quae per orbem fiunt rerum euentus potentior: qui forsitan de meis aliorumque mei similium scedulis hauriet, quod futurorum inseret]. Although Chibnall's translation of 'ex coniectura' is plausible, it may given the context be preferable to render 'from the prognostications of earlier writers' as 'from interpretation of earlier writers'.
[33] Sønnesyn, 'Orderic Vitalis and the mystical morals of history', 284-97.
[34] Sønnesyn, 'Orderic Vitalis and the mystical morals of history', 284-97.
[35] For the attribution of this phrase, see: John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, trans. D. D. McGarry, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury: A Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium* (Berkeley and Los Angeles CA, 1962), 167.

> elegance and value of their treatises, I exhort the learned men of our own time to imitate their remarkable erudition. Because it is not my lot to direct others in what they should do, I can at least endeavour to shun vain idleness, and bestir myself to undertake something which may give delight to my ordinary fellow-students.[36]

Orderic listed those atop whose shoulders he was metaphorically standing, but also defined in elegant form his predecessors' and his own foremost end. Like earlier historians, he would be engaged in *studying* the erring world. Of particular note is that he identified the 'recording of useful and injurious contingency (*contingentia*)' as the most profitable means to that end. Orderic was not content with leaving behind an expansive narrative overlaid with a lightly sketched explanation of events, hoping that a learned *studiosi* might one day tackle the more fundamental questions. Rather, he had set out to tackle the fundamental questions himself, to comprehend the essential mechanisms that governed the world. Orderic's vision was strikingly similar to that of William of Malmesbury that we discussed above, but even more arresting is that they both zeroed-in on elucidating the same concept. In their own words, they recommended that the world could be understood through the study of fortune, i.e. the encompassing concept, and/or contingency, i.e. the human subject's experience of fortune. They were building atop the insight of ages past, but taking clearer aim at what they perceived to be the chink in the armour of human ignorance – the causes of vexatious turns of fortune, of contingencies, which rendered mankind captive to the cycle of futility and despair. It is my argument that in lifting the veil of fortune's caprice, the historians of the twelfth century hoped to see further than any who had gone before. The extent of that ambition is all the more striking given that it was the product of men who have often been labelled the champions of Augustinian deference to divine inscrutability. Theirs was, rather, explanatory ambition of the highest order. It was not predicated on avantgarde rationalism, nor conducted in the schools, and nor did it call the immanence of God's governance of creation into question. Rather, it was the work of a milieu dominated by the black cloister, and it sought to resolve God's patterning of the world at a higher resolution than ever before, in part to refute any who might seek to deny or ignore it.

[36] *HE*, vol. 1, 130 [Anteriores nostri ab antiquis temporibus labentis seculi excursus prudenter inspexerunt, et bona seu mala mortalibus contingentia pro cautela hominum notauerunt, et futuris semper prodesse uolentes scripta scriptis accumulauerunt. Hoc nimirum uidemus a Moyse et Danihele factum aliisque agiographis, hoc in Darete Phrigio et Pompeio Trogo comperimus aliisque gentilium historiographis, hoc etiam aduertimus in Eusebio et Orosio de Ormesta mundi anglicoque Beda et Paulo cassiniensi aliisque scriptoribus aecclesiasticis. Horum allegationes delectabiliter intueor, elegantiam et utilitatem sintagmatum lauo et admiror, nostrique temporis sapientes eorum notabile sedimen sequi cohortor. Verum quia non est meum aliis imperare, inutile saltem nitor ocium declinare; et memetipsum exercens aliquid actitare, quod meis debeat simplicibus sinmatitis placere].

*The 'model' of fortune*

According to the prologues to their great works, at least two of the historians believed that they were engaged in uncovering the mysteries of Providence's temporal ways.[37] Their explicit desire was to learn more about fortune and contingency. To what extent, though, did they believe they had succeeded? Given that they did not pen treatises that explicitly recapitulated their 'findings', to what extent do their histories suggest that they had succeeded in determining the workings of fortune and the human experience of contingency? What did their 'model' of fortune's operation look like?

The headline conclusion of my earlier studies was that the historians always indicated specific causal responsibility for any specific reverse that they characterised as *fortuna*.[38] This conclusion was based on analysis of the major historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon. I showed that each of those historians used the term to describe a reverse that followed from a recapitulation of a specific transgressive action, which the historian ostensibly accounted a sin, and which had been committed in the recent past. To a varying degree, this pattern was apparent in all of the mature works of the aforementioned historians and, through it, they usually imputed causal responsibility for specific reverses to named individuals.[39] Sometimes, when events were narrated at a lower resolution, the historians cited communal sin.

*Fortuna* had not always been part of Orderic Vitalis' causal lexicon. As noted above, he had never invoked the concept of fortune during the period of his 'historical apprenticeship' as an editor of the *GND*, but mentioned *fortuna* 32 times in his mature work, the *Historia ecclesiastica*. It is difficult to determine conclusively what, if anything, was the significance of Orderic's decision to begin using the term. It is possible it reflected a shift in intellectual discourse, a prospect treated at length below. Another possibility is that there was something intrinsic to the *HE*'s structure and aims that prompted Orderic to expand his causal lexicon. On the latter point, it is worth noting recent work that has restated that Orderic crafted the *HE* around St Évroul Abbey itself - the house being the organising nexus that its narrative arcs emanated from and returned to.[40] Accordingly, the *HE*'s structure may be visualised in the form of a tree - the house itself being the trunk, while the narrative arcs and sub-arcs are its branches. This structure was to facilitate the

[37] Gransden, 'Prologues in the historiography of twelfth-century England', 125-51.
[38] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 37-8. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 79-83.
[39] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', especially 37-8.
[40] D. Roach, 'The material and the visual: objects and memories in the Historia ecclesiastica of Orderic Vitalis', *The Haskins Society Journal* 24 (2012), 63-78. This point is argued more thoroughly throughout: D. Roach, 'Narrative strategy in the Historia ecclesiastica of Orderic Vitalis', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter (2014). Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 13-14.

memorialisation of St Évroul's benefactors and their deeds, both within Christendom and at its advancing borders, whilst associating their noble efforts with the house. It also situated the house, temporally and spatially, in the providential progression of universal history. As St Évroul's patrons had ventured to do God's work in Southern Europe and the Holy Land, the expanding size of Orderic's work thus mirrored the growing reach of her house's intercessory liturgy, and attested *in extremis* to the black monks' connectedness with the secular world. There were, however, evident downsides to a monastery being so well connected, and it was around these that Orderic confected an apology for his house's failings predicated on recourse to fortune. His argument was that links with the outside world had drawn fortune into the cloister.[41] Take, for instance, his remarks on the tenure of Abbot Roger Le Sap, the same abbot who had patronised his history of the 'restoration' of the house.[42] During his thirty-four year tenure, the abbot had,

> admitted a hundred and fifteen new monks, whose lives were subject to varying fortune. Some of them grew in virtue, and with God's help attained the prize of their holy calling; but others, at Satan's tempting slid back into the foul abyss of vice, for which they will receive their deserts from the just Judge.[43]

If the phrase 'Satan's tempting' appears vague, any uncertainty is resolved only a few lines later, as Orderic identifies those who he believed had been responsible for the reverses that disrupted cloistered life.

> Ecclesiastical order and monastic discipline were often disturbed by outward disorders resulting from the neglect or malice of secular rulers. All who desired to follow a monastic way of life in Normandy or on its frontiers in the time of Duke Robert and King Philip of France learn this to their cost.[44]

Orderic's invocation of fortune attributed causal responsibility for his brothers' sins to the secular disorder that raged in Normandy at the time. Suggesting that reverses had been engendered by secular vice defended his abbatial patrons from any accusation of complicity in or culpability for the house's internal failings and scandals. The house's otherwise mutually beneficent and beneficial connectedness with the outside world drew the sin of the secular sphere into the cloister. Orderic's strategy not only sidestepped any suggestion of abbatial dereliction, but also edified his brethren as to the peculiarity of their spiritual peril. He contrasted the Norman houses' exposure to vicissitudes with the tranquillity that the English houses enjoyed in the period. He illustrated this point with a longing comparative reference to the isolation of Thorney Abbey in England, whose abbot was Robert of Prunelai, erstwhile prior of Noyon, a cell of St Évroul. Orderic praised Thorney's

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[41] See: Mégier, 'Fortuna', 58-60.
[42] *HE*, vol. 1, 130-131.
[43] *HE*, vol. 4, 254-5 [Hic centum et quindecim discipulos ad monachatum suscepit, quorum uitam mobilis fortuna uariabiliter agitauit. Nam quidam eorum uirtutibus florentes ad supernae uocationis brauium Deo iuuante peruenerunt; nonnulli uero insidiante Sathana in cenulentam uiciorum uoraginem relapsi sunt; a iusto recepturi iudice quod meruerunt].
[44] *HE*, vol. 4, 256-7 [exteriorum perturbationes rerum quae per desidiam seu nequitiam secularium principum fiunt; ordini aecclesiastico et rigori monastico multociens impedimento sunt. Quod omnes qui in Normannia uel confinio eius religioni seruire concupierunt; tempore Roberti ducis et Philippi regis Francorum nimis experti sunt].

'faithful performance of the divine offices and [for being] utterly removed from daily intercourse with secular persons'.[45] Its rigour of duty and spiritual purity, Orderic suggested, had been helped in no small part by its tranquil isolation, vouchsafed by the firm rule of law that William the Conqueror had instituted in England.[46] Orderic was clear that spiritual purity and advancement depended on political stability. It was stability that England offered, and for which Normandy longed. Orderic's investigation determined causality between recent sins and subsequent reverses of fortune. Articulating these insights sometimes served an immediate purpose, but this should not detract from the words of his prologue, where he declared there was a general usefulness in understanding the causes of worldly contingency.

William of Malmesbury's own investigations into the causes of contingency yielded the same basic conclusion – that specific reverses of fortune were engendered by specific and identifiable recent sins.[47] William proceeded to weave that insight into the causal subtext that permeated his major historical works. The weight of corroborative evidence for this contention is overwhelming.[48] Take, for instance, the *Gesta regum*'s assessment of the career of William Fitz Osbert, Earl of Hereford.[49] The earl was to be 'compared with the best of princes, and perhaps even placed above them', such was his generosity and the justice of his lordship.[50] Yet, at length he met his end to a reverse that had been engendered by his own sin

> To this record of success fortune set a discreditable end when, to satisfy his lust (*cupidine*) for a woman, the pillar of that great kingdom, wise counsellor of both England and Normandy, went off to Flanders and met his death in an ambush.[51]

The earl's failure to subordinate his passions to reason led to committing sin, which brought that fatal reverse upon him. William took care to acknowledge the earl's otherwise distinguished and virtuous career, but the overall impression was to remind that even one unchecked vice would lead to sin and so undo otherwise-laudable efforts. In this example, sin and reverse bracket a single sentence, and their proximity emphasises the implied causal connection. More usually, William recapitulated a sin but kept the audience hanging some time before relenting to describe the consequent reverse. The clarity of the causal implication was maintained through the consistency of this approach. It was a strategy that encouraged the audience to dwell on the extensive consequences of even innocuous sins. A novel means of expressing this causal pattern relied on an idiosyncratic depiction of the wheel of fortune.[52] Medieval depictions of the wheel usually suggested that it turned innately, or else showed the metaphorical goddess *fortuna* cranking it

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[45] *HE*, vol. 6, 150-151 [in cultu summae deitatis grata pollet religione, et ab omni semotum est secularium cohabitatione].
[46] *HE*, vol. 6, 150-151.
[47] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*'. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 30-55.
[48] See: Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*'.
[49] *GR*, 472-5.
[50] *GR*, 472-3 [principibus optimis comparandus fuerit, haud scio an etiam preponendus].
[51] *GR*, 474-5. [tam secundos euentus turpi fine fortuna conclusit, dum tanti regni sustentator, Angliae et Normanniae consiliarius, pro feminea cupidine Flandriam pergens ab insidiatoribus impetitus interiit].
[52] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 34.

herself.[53] Such was William's confidence in his causal model that he suggested the wheel only spun as the result of recent sin. Having already remarked on the charge of adultery laid by a papal legate against King Æthelbald of Mercia, William explained that,

> Æthelbald governed in profound peace for a long period – 41 years; but at last he spun (*uoluit*) fortune's wheel, and his subjects put him to death.[54]

These two examples demonstrate a belief that reverses often came back to bite the very sinner who had propagated them.

Sometimes, sins prompted reverses of fortune that proved circumstantially advantageous to the sinner. This peculiarity of the concept has not been given the attention it deserves, and distinguished it from conventionally apparent divine justice. William cast Bishop Roger of Salisbury as an example in this mould.

> God seems to me to have displayed him to the rich as a warning of the mutability of things, lest they should trust in the uncertainty of riches, by seeking which, as the Apostle says, some concerning faith have made shipwreck.[55]

The charges laid against Roger were grave: William states that he stole from the royal treasury and the lords of England, and to satiate his pride used his illicit gains to erect magnificent structures whose upkeep threatened to cripple future generations.[56] Roger also raised two of his nephews to bishoprics in England's wealthiest sees, and persistently 'abused God's indulgence'.[57] To William's especial chagrin, he manipulated monastic affairs to his advantage, and kept Malmesbury Abbey deprived of its abbatial independence until 1140.[58] He was, throughout, 'conscious of his power'.[59] Through his sins, 'he received almost anything he could think of', but eventually fortune turned.[60] As William reflected, 'in later years fortune, that had favoured him excessively for so long, at last stung the man cruelly with a scorpion's tail'.[61] The observation that sinful acts could yield the transient prosperity that was of the world is not in itself surprising. Yet, at the time, fortune's 'rewarding' of sinners in this way was understood to perform a teleological function. For example, William related Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury's reaction to the good fortune that attended King William II Rufus, despite his sins. The Archbishop was said to have been 'delighted to see it, for he hoped that because of this abundance of blessing the king would in the end set the church

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[53] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 34; 34 n. 79: For the possible uniqueness of William's iteration of fortune's wheel, which never features in surveys of wheel imagery employed during the High Middle Ages, see, for example: C. M. Radding, 'Fortune and Her Wheel: the Meaning of a Medieval Symbol', *Mediaevistik* 5 (1992), 127–38.
[54] *GR*, vol. 1, 114-15.
[55] *HN*, 64-5 [Eum michi uidetur Deus exemplum diuitibus pro uolubilitate rerum exhibuisse, ne sperent in incerto diuitiarum; quas quidam, ut ait apostolus, appetentes a fide naufragauerunt].
[56] *HN*, 66-7.
[57] *HN*, 66-7 [Diuinitatis abutebatur indulgentia].
[58] *HN*, 68-71.
[59] *HN*, 66-7 [aliquanto durius quam talem uirum deceret].
[60] *HN*, 66-7 [ei quaecumque pene cogitasset conferebantur].
[61] *HN*, 68-9 [Posterioribus annis fortuna, nimium ante et diu ei blandita, ad extremum scorpiacea crudeliter hominem cauda percussit].

free'.[62] Taking Boethius' lead, Anselm's reported words attest to contemporary belief that Providence in fortune's guise sometimes granted material advantage because God, in his mercy, prompted sinners to reconsider the prosperity of their lot and dedicate less of themselves to the pursuit of those things that were lesser. What, though, were the maximal contemporary ambitions for those who *did* recognise their prompt to reform? This is a matter taken up in Chapter Five. For now it shall suffice to restate that William recognised that fortune, as it was engendered by sin, bestowed either advantage or disadvantage on those who it affected.

William also recognised that fortune did not always visit its reverse upon those whose sin had engendered it.[63] A poignant example is offered in William's reflection on the good fortune enjoyed by King William II Rufus. In the original version of this passage, William had explained that,

> *The king's arrogance*, and I think this was the doing of the Devil, began to rage against the archbishop, and plots were prepared against him to take effect at the next court. He undermined and thwarted them all by asking leave to go to Rome…[64]

Sometime later, William returned to the *Gesta Pontificum* to expunge its most explicit critiques of Rufus. He amended the opening of this statement, substituting 'the king's arrogance' for *fortuna*, thereby leaving a tacit but, by that point in the narrative, unambiguous indication of causation.

> *Fortune,* and I think this was the doing of the Devil, began to rage against the archbishop, and plots were prepared against him to take effect at the next court…[65]

That reverse engendered by the king's arrogance was visited on Anselm, and eventually forced him into exile.[66] It also, thereby, conferred proximate advantage on Rufus. The visitation of fortune's reverses on those who existed in causal proximity to the sinner, as well as the advantage that God sometimes permitted sinners to attain as a consequence of their sinful acts, are aspects of the 'model' with extensive theoretical implications. Those shall be treated later in this chapter.

William's use of *fortuna* in his identification and articulation of extended causal chains is clearly apparent in his treatment of the 1120 *White Ship* disaster.[67] The sinking witnessed the death of the royal heir-apparent, the legitimate son of Henry I, William Adelin. William's declaration, as the ship sinks, that 'fortune was against them, and brought to nought all their endeavours', projects responsibility for the sinking back through a whole sequence of sins that his narrative had just related.[68] Various individuals' vices, that had gone unchecked where they should not have done, are

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[62] *GP*, 142-3 [Videbat haec Anselmus et aggaudebat, sperans illum propter tam affluentem gratiam quandoque liberam facere aecclesiam].
[63] For further examples and discussion, see: Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', especially 30-33.
[64] *GP*, 142–3 [seviebat, instinctu credo diaboli, contra pontificem principalis arrogantia, parabanturque in proximam curiam contra eum machinamenta. Quae omnia petendo licentiam eundi Romam quassavit et depulit]. Emphasis my own.
[65] *GP*, 142–3 [seviebat, instinctu credo diaboli, contra pontificem fortuna, parabanturque in proximam curiam contra eum machinamenta. Quae omnia petendo licentiam eundi Romam quassavit et depulit].
[66] *GP*, 142-51.
[67] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 36.
[68] *GR*, 760-61 [sed obsistebat fortuna, omnes eorum conatus in irritum deducens].

shown to have manifested in further sinful action. In reverse narrative order: the ship's crew are said to have been 'deep sunk in liquor', while they hit the rock through 'carelessness'.[69] The transgressions of the crew had gone unchecked by William Adelin, whose youth, and the sloth and pride that came with it, is one reason cited for his failure to demonstrate prudent and temperate leadership.[70] Another reason given for the boy's failings is 'his father's indulgence', on account of which he 'enjoyed all the sweets of kingship except the name of king'.[71] In other words, he enjoyed the benefits that came with royal prestige without having learned, or more to the point, without having been taught, to handle the responsibility that came with those privileges. Undoubtedly, it is at the feet of Henry I that William lays the overall blame for the *White Ship* disaster and, by extension, the civil war that engulfed England for twenty years after the king's passing.[72] Throughout his histories, there emerges a sense from William's writings that his confidence in having reckoned the causes of injurious reverses of fortune, and in having interpreted the message that God propagated through those visitations, far surpassed his trust in the conventions of human politics.[73] The culpability he assigned to Henry I in his recapitulation of the *White Ship* tragedy endorses this assessment, for it implicitly critiqued the king's decision to have sent his son to give homage to the King of France for Normandy in his stead. However strongly entrenched in convention and perhaps even scriptural precedent King Henry's decision was, William interpreted the course of events that followed as indicative of God's disapproval. Henry had 'loathed' the idea of doing homage himself, and so allowed his pride to cloud his judgement.[74] He was imprudent to have trusted so much in the readiness of his son to handle such lofty responsibility, and unjust to have conferred such a duty unto one so unworthy. Reverses of fortune punctuated William's lengthy causal chains. The manifest consequences of those reverses articulated the gravity of what might initially have come across to an audience as minor or innocuous transgressions that resided at the head of those chains. This, then, was one of William of Malmesbury's impetuses for 'learning the changefulness of fortune'. Where testimony revealed that fortune had reversed, the conduct of those in causal proximity could be interrogated to identify the course that had produced a sinful action. This was the determination of the standards of objective, divine justice as it manifested in the world. Through this, William could enunciate where human convention had fallen short of objective justice. Tacitly thereby, William was recommending ethical reform based on those insights his investigation yielded. He wanted his audience to understand where seemingly minor transgressions, including those that had not been recognised as sinful at the time, had wrought grave consequences. One of his aims, then, was to determine the standards of divine justice, and in

[69] *GR*, 760-61 [imprudentia].
[70] *GR*, 758-61.
[71] *GR*, 760-61 [paterna indulgentia] [nichil delitiarum preter nomen regis].
[72] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 36. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 45-50.
[73] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 36-7.
[74] *GR*, 758-9 [fastidiret].

turn relate those insights. To any audience that recognises and accepts his tacit knowledge claims, his works bear tremendous rhetorical force and edificatory value.

For William, another impulse to 'model' fortune was the desire to refute those 'sceptics' who had openly questioned the Providence of God. One alleged proponent of such doubt was King William II Rufus, whose headstrong rule and recurrent quarrels with Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury seem to have rendered him and his purported utterances a threat in the eyes of the Church.[75] As Carl Watkins has noted, whether Rufus' incorrigibility arose out sincere doubt, or the pragmatism of rule, the account of his death was seized upon by the historians as a pointed reminder that, in the end, Providence caught up with even the most powerful.[76] In Watkins' words, the historians' affirmations were the riposte of the traditional Augustinian to

> . . . a world in which the church's claims about Providence might be contested, the scale of divine intervention questioned: in this environment, the moral workings of history needed to be demonstrated rather than merely assumed.[77]

This summary is fair, although arguably the matter of how the historians actually went about demonstrating the moral workings of history has been misunderstood. Some of the charges of providential scepticism laid against Rufus have been read, wrongly I would argue, as indicative of the historians' own views.[78] Whatever the extent of Rufus' scepticism more generally, in the narrative record he is particularly vociferous in mocking the orthodox view that God, through Providence, disposed all events according to His perfect justice. The king also denied the validity of the judicial ordeal, and announced that henceforth he would arbitrate given that God had proven unable or unwilling.[79]

> 'What is this? Is God a just judge? Perish the man who believes *that* from now on! By the hills and vales, people will answer to my judgement in future, not God's, which is at the mercy of the last request He gets'.[80]

Contemporary dissatisfaction with the judicial ordeal was another impulse for the refinement of providential thought, and one treated at length below.[81] Instances where William narrated the king's expressions of doubt have been co-opted into scholars' arguments that have imputed scepticism or at least shades of unorthodoxy to William himself. These arguments have typically cited one of William's supposedly surprising reflections on the preponderance of good fortune that the king enjoyed.

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[75] For discussion, see: Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 43-5.
[76] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 43-5.
[77] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 45.
[78] For instance: Thomson, 'Satire, irony, and humour', 125.
[79] *GP*, 162-5.
[80] *GP*, 164-5 [Quid est hoc? Deus est iustus iudex? Pereat qui hoc deinceps crediderit! Per montes et ualles, meo iuditio amodo respondebitur, non Dei, quod pro uoluntate cuiusque hinc inde periclitatur].
[81] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44.

> [Rufus] so completely benefited from the play of fortune that God might have been thought to be vying with fortune to do him service.[82]

This statement has been the subject of much debate.[83] Rodney Thomson thought it daring of a cloistered monk to have countenanced such an utterance, and concluded that William saw the course of history as having been 'dominated by chance'.[84] Similarly, for John Gillingham, William had not regarded the course of history as 'some profound cyclical process', but a happenstance of mundane human causes and 'the play of chance – which in William's history plays a greater role than God'.[85] More recently, scholars have reaffirmed that there is a demonstrable moral patterning to most of William's narratives, even as they concede that William's providential explanatory mode sometimes broke down and forced recourse to *fortuna*.[86] That concession followed from these scholars' understanding of the meaning and role of *fortuna* in those narratives. Sverre Bagge, for example, characterised William's explanatory recourse to fortune in the final book of the *Historia nouella* as being tantamount to a concession of historiographical defeat.[87] The *Historia nouella* was a contemporary history, and Bagge's argument runs that William invoked fortune in the sense of inscrutability when he could not account in plausible moral terms for the setbacks experienced by the Angevins in their struggle against King Stephen.[88] Bagge rightly acknowledged that William's use of fortune did not invoke a sense of inanimate chance. William would have been aware that the concept of fortune had been Christianised, and so its invocation was not to deny God's presence in the chain of causation.[89] Yet, he went on to conclude, mistakenly, that William would have understood *fortuna* as 'inscrutable, clearly distinct from Divine Providence', and 'without any discernible moral consequences'.[90] In fact, as per the above discussion, William's works, from the outset of his historical career, had articulated the moral cause of each reverse of fortune he narrated. For William, fortune was neither inscrutable nor without moral consequences.[91] In practice, whenever he 'abandoned' a providential explanation in favour of an explanation predicated on fortune, it was to convey the consequences of whichever sin his narrative *had* just related. The ensuing reverse was not necessarily visited upon the sinner themselves, but it always had its determinable moral cause. This refuted those who made one of two claims. First, it repudiated the

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[82] *GP*, 142-3. [ita in omnibus usus est placido allusu fortunae ut uideretur cum eo Deus benefitiis certare]. Note that here I have retained the sense of the OMT translation but have opted to stick to the original Latin in repeating the term *fortunae*. Given the technical precision of William's terminology, the OMT's attempt to avoid repetition through the use of 'chance' as a synonym obscures the sense.

[83] In discussion at the 'William of Malmesbury and his Legacy' conference held at the University of Oxford in 2015, S. O. Sønnesyn suggested that the sense of the passage could also plausibly be rendered 'he [the king] so completely benefited from the play of fortune that God might have been thought to be vying with the king to do service [to the realm]'. The two renderings are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and that duality of meaning might have been the intention behind the Latin formulation.

[84] Thomson, 'Satire, irony, and humour', 124-5.

[85] Gillingham, 'Civilising the English', 35.

[86] See, for instance: Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44. Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence',113–32.

[87] Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence', 125-8.

[88] Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence', 127.

[89] Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence', 129.

[90] Bagge, 'Ethics, politics, and providence', 129-30. Forster, William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*, 23-4.

[91] Forster, William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*, 37-8.

sceptics – those like Rufus who had claimed and perhaps still were claiming that the distribution of advantage and disadvantage in the world was so indiscriminate that it rendered the notion of immanent Divine governance absurd. Yet, it also exposed the naivety of any who held that it was possible to deduce the moral worth of individual protagonists from the outcome of one event without any further context – in particular those who subscribed to the validity of the judicial ordeal.[92] The ideological implications of the 'model' are many, and are explicated in the depth they deserve later in this chapter.

Henry of Huntingdon tells us that he had been tasked to narrate the history of the Kingdom of England and the origins of its people.[93] His patron asked that he follow the example of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*.[94] Amongst other things, that meant interpreting the providential significance of events for the benefit of his audience. Arguably, Henry's history can be understood as a comparison of the formulation and evolution of the English kingdom with the moral and spiritual progression of its people. The problem was that political progress had sometimes been achieved through sin. Accounting for Providence thus posed an explanatory challenge, and Fortune offered a solution. It seems beyond doubt that Henry's work demonstrates an authorial recognition of the 'model' that reverses of fortune were engendered by recent sins.[95] He writes, for instance, of Æthelbald, a king of Mercia, a man who 'despised holiness and neglected justice in favour of the sword', and goes on to explain how 'Changeable fortune exalted [king Æthelbald and his foes] by turns in their military engagements'.[96] This example is not atypical. Henry often casts war as a symptom of underlying moral malaise and sin.[97] Yet, war had done much to help drive England's unification.[98] Consider Book IV of the *Historia anglorum*, which concerns the 'inexorable progress of the kingdom of Wessex' toward a more united England.[99] Therein, Henry narrates how the lesser kingdoms of England had finally been brought under a single rule through the conquests of king Ecgberht of Wessex. The magnitude of this achievement is amplified, as Henry embellishes Ecgberht's victories and downplays his losses.[100] In reality, things had not been so straightforward. The Mercians had regained possession of their kingdom after some time, but Henry chose to diverge from his source in implying that Ecgberht had voluntarily ceded Mercia under terms of vassalage.[101] Henry's editorialization is to bring the narrative of Book IV to a satisfying conclusion, but also to emphasise, perhaps troublingly, that sin could help drive unification. Ecgberht had

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[92] Forster, William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*, 25-7. See also: R. Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: the Medieval Judicial Ordeal* (Oxford, 1986), 86-9. P. R. Hyams, 'Trial by ordeal: the key to proof in the early common law', in M. S. Arnold et al. (eds.), *On the Laws and Customs of England: Essays in Honor of Samuel E. Thorne* (Chapel Hill NC, 1981), 101-6.
[93] *HA*, 4-7.
[94] *HA*, 4-7.
[95] For additional exemplification of this point, see: Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 56-78.
[96] *HA*, 238-9 [spreta sanctificatione gladiisque iura postponens] [Fortuna autem uaria uicibus uariis ... Martis euentibus extollebat]. In the first quote, I have shifted the tense of Henry's words.
[97] See, for instance: *HA*, 240-41; 276-7.
[98] *HA*, lx.
[99] *HA*, lx-lxi.
[100] *HA*, 260-65.
[101] *HA*, 262-3; 262 n. 207.

taken a step towards the unification of the English kingdom and her people, but Henry cautioned that 'progress' had been made possible through the king's '[good] fortune', which had in turn arisen from his 'barbarism (*inmanitati*)'.[102] Diana Greenway noted that in making this point, Henry alluded to Lucan I.148-9: 'he [Julius Caesar] followed up each success and snatched at the favour of fortune'.[103] Although Henry only used the term *fortuna* fourteen times in the *Historia anglorum* (approximately 12,500 lines of Latin in OMT), his transparent allusions to Lucan and invocations of Caesarean leadership keep fortune at the forefront of his explanatory task and, arguably, the audience's consciousness. Caesar's rise and fall had exemplified that reliance and fixation on fortune's constancy was the height of foolishness.[104] The prudent instead accepted the transience of fortune and turned its favours towards attaining those higher ends that were beyond its realm.[105] In providential terms this meant moral reform and, because it did not arrive, Ecgberht's 'achievement' soon crumbled. That much is clear from Henry's reflection on the king's passing, and the subsequent remarks that open the next book on the Danish Wars. Ecgberht eventually 'yielded up to the fates', while Henry identifies the Danes' arrival as the fourth of the five figurative 'plagues' that wrought divine vengeance on England because of her sins.[106]

> The reason why the justice of God was kindled upon them with such fury was this … Just as their wickedness was represented in the deeds of the kings, so also men of every rank and office devoted themselves to evil and treachery.[107]

In other words the moral and spiritual unification of England's people under the example of God had not kept pace with political unification. Political unity and good governance could help foster moral and spiritual unity, but not unless political leaders were so inclined. Ecgberht, evidently, had not been. And so, as a reverse had exalted the political unity of England, another arose that cast it back into disorder.

To Henry's eyes, the course of English history had been *both* linear and cyclical. English history had witnessed many laudable events, miracles, and renovations, but each advancement had been threatened and undercut by sin. When further correction was mandated, God permitted another of the 'plagues' to be visited upon the island and the cycle repeated itself.[108] To repurpose an analogy, fortune's wheel was turning, but it was turning on a path towards national unity under God. That path was steep, and England often slipped back some way when torque to the wheel exceeded traction, but some progress had been made. Henry, then, could castigate the sins of an age whilst acknowledging that their consequences had laid the foundation of the political changes that helped future generations to avoid them. Reckoning those sins gradually pieced together a

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[102] *HA*, 260-61; 264-5 [fortuna].
[103] *HA*, 260-61. Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13 [Successus urguere suos, instare fauori | Numinis].
[104] Henry echoes this sentiment on various occasions. See, for instance: 616-7; 722-3.
[105] *HA*, 616-7.
[106] *HA*, [fatis concessit]; 272-3 [plagis].
[107] *HA*, 274-5 [Cur autem tanto furore Dei iusticia in eos exarserit, causa hec est ... Sicut autem in regalibus gestis impietas eorum descripta est, ita uniuscuiusque ordinis et officii homines dolo et prodicione insistebant].
[108] *HA*, i.4; 14-15.

roadmap of how to summit the teleological path. Manifest in Henry's eyes, certainly until 1135, was the advancing political unification of the English kingdom and the profitability of deriving edificatory insight from historical testimony, in which he was engaged. Henry's history is one in which the divine plan for humanity is never far from the surface, but his view of that plan has arguably been misconstrued.[109] I disagree with Nancy Partner's contention that Henry believed that 'the best we can achieve for ourselves [in this life] are castles of sand and, humbled, [that we must] turn towards the eternal mansion'.[110] Rather, Henry, like his contemporaries, regarded human effort over time to be essential in building a secure foundation – unity - from which contingency cannot interfere in our access to God. More on that follows.

The other major historian of the period who made substantive use of the term *fortuna* was the author of the *Gesta Stephani*.[111] As the author does not identify himself in the text, the history's authorship has been the subject of debate.[112] R. H. C. Davis' suggestion, that it is the product of Robert of Lewes, Bishop of Bath, has prevailed as the most satisfactory and seems compelling enough to adopt here.[113] According to Davis, Robert penned his contemporary history to demonstrate that God vigorously defended the sanctity of the episcopacy. He showed how Providence had foiled the threats to episcopal independence and dignity that were arising from the horrors and depredations of Stephen's reign.[114]

> Its division into two Books was to emphasise, as we have already seen, that Stephen's defeat and captivity in 1141, so far from being a freak of fortune, was a judgement of God. When his enemies had disarmed him, Stephen 'kept on crying out in a voice of humbled complaint that this mark of ignominy had come upon him because God avenged his injuries' and our author leaves us in no doubt that the injury in question was the arrest of the bishops, which he had previously described as 'a monstrous sin against God himself'.[115]

The only problem with Davis' assessment is that it imputes to fortune a rather different sense than Robert would have understood. The 'model' may very well have permeated contemporary intellectual discourse by the time that Robert wrote, and in any case he must have been well aware that reverses of fortune, in whatever direction, were still judgements of God on human sin. His understanding of these tenets is apparent in the example of Turgis of Avranches. Turgis had been entrusted to the guardianship of Walden Castle by King Stephen, but later refused the king entry to it out of fear that he might be replaced.[116] This broke the bonds of vassalage and transgressed the

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[109] N. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago and London, 1977), 47-8.
[110] Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 48.
[111] *GS*.
[112] The issue was most recently raised by: E. King, 'The *Gesta Stephani*', 195-206.
[113] *GS*, xviii-xxxviii.
[114] *GS*, xxxiii
[115] *GS*, xxxiii.
[116] *GS*, 174-7.

rightful order of things, and Robert calls it a rebellion (*rebellari*).[117] Turgis strove to avoid justice for his sin, but was

> … ignorant of the future, [of] how God the disposer of all things, who changes fortune for whom he wills and as he wills, had provided that he should no longer hold the castle … [for, as Turgis was out hunting] the king suddenly and unexpectedly arrived with a very strong body of knights, fortune aiding him or rather, to speak more truly, God favouring his wishes.[118]

For Robert, fortune clearly disposed events according to God's plan for rehabilitating sinners and humbling the righteous. In this, the distance between it and more straightforwardly apparent divine justice was rather narrower than is usually assumed. Whenever outcomes were shown to have deservedly punished sinners, and so were usually characterised as having been effected by God's Providence, the 'punishment' was only ever half of the story of the providential intent. Implicit in any suggestion of divine punishment was that that was God's way of prompting the sinner to reform. This is often taken as read but is sometimes affirmed in more explicit terms. An example is found in Robert's reflections on Stephen's captivity.

> For He who, when the King of Babylon raised himself up proudly and haughtily, enfeebled and degraded him to the shape of a beast, that through that very degradation, when he had recovered his senses and a better knowledge of God, He might afterwards exalt him to a loftier height and greater esteem … that same God, by that secret plan whereby He does nothing without a cause, willed that King Stephen should be cast down for a moment that his elevation afterwards might be loftier and more wonderful.[119]

This is to suggest that by the time the king next ascended to the summit of fortune he would have acquired a greater knowledge of God - that is, of virtue and how to accommodate that insight into action. Next time, and this is a theme that Chapter Five develops at length, he would make better use of his good fortune and royal supremacy. It also suggests that although Stephen was then at his nadir, the sins of his captors were sure to engender reverses that would later exalt him anew. The only alternative was in the conviction that the Angevins might use their fortune in order to keep the king captive whilst also precluding contingency and instilling tranquillity in the realm.

> So when the king had been captured and, as has been set forth, imprisoned in Bristol by the will of God, the whole of England was shaken with amazement, and to some it was an occasion of festival and seemed the dawning of a new day, as they hoped that an end might thereby be put to strife and war; to others, of deeper insight, it seemed that the wrong they had done their king and lord could not be atoned for without very great prejudice to the kingdom and their own side, nor yet could the turbulent strife so easily be ended, it being clear that both the greater part of the kingdom had inclined to

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[117] *GS*, 174-7.
[118] *GS*, 176-7 [incertus profecto futuri, quoquo rerum dispositor Deus cui uult et quomodo uult fortunam permutans, non eum castellum diuitius habiturum praeuidit ... rex cum ualidissimo militum globo, auspice fortuna, immo ut uerius dicam, Deo sibi ad uotum conspirante, subito et improuise aduenit].
[119] *GS*, 114-15 [Qui enim regem Babylonicum superbe se et arroganter extollentem usque ad bestialem formam infirmatum depressit, ut per ipsam depressionem, sensu et meliore in Deum congnitione recepta, altius postea et acceptius leuaret ... ipse idem secreto illo, quo nihil agit sine causa, consilio, regem Stephanum ad momentum uoluit deici, ut excelsius postea et mirificentius posset eleuari. Sed quomodo illud et quam mirabiliter contigerit, clarius in sequentibus dilucidabimus].

> the king and that everywhere the stronger castles had passed into the hands of the king's supporters. And the test of experience showed not long afterwards that it was so.[120]

In essence, Robert's suggestion here is as follows: those who thought that the king's imprisonment might bring 'the dawning of a new day' had overestimated the constancy and extent of the Angevins' fortune, whilst failing to discern the effects of their ongoing tendency toward sin. Meanwhile, 'those of deeper insight' recognised that the Angevins' fortune would likely prove insufficient to overcome the considerable resistance that yet remained. As they showed no prospect of reform, it was inevitable that their sins would continue to propagate reverses, the inconstancy of which would in the end cast them down. Arguably, the fundamental theory behind Robert's assessment was resolved at greater detail by one of Robert's contemporaries - a contention that shall be revisited in more detail in Chapter Five. When the narrative resumes, it illustrates the quickening tempo of the vicissitudes that befell the king's adherents and the Angevins in turn, those reverses being rhetorically tethered to the culpable sins.[121] Like his contemporaries Robert was given to classicising language, but unlike them he almost never shaped his narrative arcs in line with classical precedents.[122] Only rarely did he invoke Biblical narrative models.[123] One example, that scholars have not previously noted, can be found in his treatment of the death of Richard Fitz Gilbert in a Welsh ambush, and of the insurrection that followed.[124] Robert's narrative bears a very close resemblance to Judges 9:42 onwards.[125] Why Robert seems to have shied away from invoking classical or biblical narrative models is open to innumerable interpretations, but it indicates that the investigation and exposition of *fortuna*'s working was not, to him, merely a literary convention. It remained of eminent significance to him, even as he took the present and recent past very much on their own terms.

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[120] *GS*, 114-17 [Capto itaque rege, et, ut propalatum est, in Bristoam ex Dei dispositione retruso, tota Anglia concussa obstupuit, et aliis quidem festus dies, et noua lux uisa oriri, dum per hoc discordiae et bello finem imponendum sperarent; aliis altius sentientibus non posse reatum, quem in regem et dominum commiserant, sine maximo regni et suorum impedimento expiari, sed nec discordiae tumultus tam facile terminari, dum in propatulo esset et maiorem regni partem regi se inclinasse, et firmiora ubique castella regalibus cessisse. Quod et ita contigisse non multo post experto probauimus].
[121] *GS*, 116-7 ff.
[122] I analysed Robert's use of classical texts in a paper presented at the Leeds International Medieval Congress 2018, Session 521 'Allusion, Reference, and Memory in High Medieval Narratives, I'.
[123] *GS*, 16-19.
[124] *GS*, 16-19.
[125] *GS*, 16-19.

*The 'model' atomised*

Because the model has not previously been recognised or treated in scholarship, there has been no evaluation of its logical coherence, nor of its conformity with the normative theological orthodoxy. Figuring how it might have been used to substantiate ideological arguments requires that these considerations be resolved. Although it is an elegant theory, the model sought to describe a world of manifold complexity according to the parameters of a tightly-wrought orthodoxy. To what extent did it infringe on or, if the intent was such, implicitly update that orthodoxy? Did any of its recommendations constitute paradoxes, contradictions, or logical flaws? If so, then it scarcely denigrates the historians' achievement, for seldom do philosophical or theological ideologies emerge that are immune to critique. We must nevertheless consider that aspects of its logic may have been flawed or at least incomplete, and further that its deficiencies might have been recognised by those who developed and/or expounded it. Perhaps, as they attempted to push beyond Boethius' precepts, they faced a maelstrom of paradox and incoherence which they, or any other, lacked the dialectical surety to confront. The limitless interconnectedness of medieval thought, and the panoptic potential meanings and significances of any individual component of it, means that any evaluation must necessarily be selective. What follows, then, are thematic analyses of what appear to have been the most pertinent areas of conceptual sophistication or apparent dissonance. The first of these addresses the ostensible incongruity of striving to determine the standards of absolute divine justice, and trace the outlines of the perfect ethical system, on the basis of testimony and authorial judgements that were inevitably subjective. The second regards the model's implication that reverses were visited on those other than the culpable sinner themselves, and surveys the ideological ramifications of that suggestion. The third evaluates how concepts of community were believed to interact with all of the above. Lastly, consideration is given to the problem of accounting for the magnitude of reverses relative to the sins that had prompted them.

In highlighting the specific actions that were culpable for reverses of fortune, the historians were engaged in a project to extrapolate a more perfect ethical system through the observation of those human actions that, by virtue of their engendering a reverse, had constituted a sin. One problem that can beset any attempt to determine an objective truth is the subjective nature of human experience and concern. Certainly, the histories are far from uniform in their assessments of protagonists, and likewise they do not always account the outcomes of events in the same causal terms. Events characterised as reverses of fortune by one commentator were often construed as just and straightforward visitations of Providence by another. Take, for example, Orderic Vitalis and Abbot Suger's reflections on the outcome of the battle of Brémule.[126] Orderic recognised that the same event could be characterised from different perspectives as, either, just visitations of Providence or the reverses of *fortuna*. He tells us that the Anglo-Norman troops under King Henry I 'rejoiced in a just victory given by God, for the good of the holy Church and the peace of the faithful'.[127] Yet, he also mused on the probable tone of the consolation that the renegade Amaury of Montfort might have offered the defeated French King Louis:

> 'My Lord, you must not be discouraged by defeat, for such things are the chance of war and have often happened to the greatest and most famous emperors. Fortune (*fortuna*) is like a turning wheel. One moment she suddenly lifts a man up, the next throws him down; and conversely she raises the man who is prostrate and trodden in the dust more generously than he could have hoped'.[128]

Irrespective of the nomenclature each side used, the *Histora ecclesiastica* identified a sin that Orderic clearly believed had some bearing on the eventual outcome. he mentioned in the narrative leading up to the battle that, prior to it, the French army had burned a barn that belonged to the monks of Buscheron, and that 'the English had taken their bearings [towards the French army] from the rising smoke'.[129] Orderic leads directly from relation of this transgression and identification of some of the combatants into the description of the battle and its outcome, the rhetorical arrangement making it clear that he cast King Henry as the avenger of the French sin, and his army as the vehicle of God's justice. These two attributions are not mutually exclusive. As we have seen, attributions to *fortuna* were sometimes invoked even when a protagonist had engendered their subsequent reverse through their own sin. It is entirely possible for the French to have recognised that their sin had been responsible for their own reverse of fortune. As to why, in that case, they would not have conceded that the outcome had been the just punishment of Providence? If

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[126] *HE*, vol. 6, 236 n. 1; 234-43. Suger, *Vita Ludouici grossi regis*, ed. and trans. H. Waquet (Paris, 1929), 196-7.
[127] *HE*, vol. 6, 240-41 [sed legali triumpho ad utilitatem sanctae aecclesiae et quietam fidelium dante Deo tripudiabant].
[128] *HE*, vol. 6, 242-3 [Pro contrario euentu non mestificetur dominus meus: quia tales sunt bellorum casus, et plerunque summis incubuerunt ac famosissimis imperatoribus Fortuna ceu rota uergibilis est. Nam quem subito sustulit, in momento deicit, et econtra prostratum et conculcatum spe melius erigit].
[129] *HE*, vol 6, 236-7 [cuius fumum ascendentem in excelsum Angli pro indice prospexerant].

Amaury's consolatory intent is disregarded for a moment and his statement taken at face value, then it would refer to the unexpectedness of the outcome given the proximate circumstances – that the outcome could not have been expected given the valour of the French forces, or some tactical advantage that they possessed. Such an assessment would itself have been subjective to some degree, as the same basic evidence was evaluated through the lens of a predominantly martial rather than a predominantly moral value structure. Another alternative is that different testimony availed itself to different commentators. We learn from the French panegyrist and historian Abbot Suger of the French troops' contention that it had, in fact, been the English who had started a fire as a smokescreen.[130] Testimony could be distorted before it reached the historian, as it was refracted through many subjective lenses. The historical memory of Brémule speaks to one of the chief limitations of ethical and theological analysis that was predicated on empirical evidence.

The model's objectivity was impinged upon, as the above example illustrates, by the subjective biases of testimony and/or the historian themselves. Logically, any explanation of the justice of an event relied entirely on the availability of *full and truthful* testimony. If God disposes events in the world according to absolute justice, then absolute justice can only be understood with access to comprehensive and veritable testimony. Is this too high an evidential burden to expect of our historians? Common sense tells us that it is highly unlikely that medieval historians had access to anything approaching a truly exhaustive corpus of testimony at all levels of resolution. Modern philosophy has exposited the epistemological challenges associated with procuring a comprehensive and objective testimony of anything.[131] However, it is one thing to critique, by the standards of today, the validity of the insights derived of the model, and another to imply that its validity or utility in-period were deemed negligible because of contemporary sensitivity to subjectivity. It is also difficult, in any given case, to *prove* that historians did not have access in making their judgements to all of what would have been regarded as comprehensive testimony. Studies have shown that historians often had access to much more testimony than they chose to present in a given narrative.[132] The prospect of such studies is that the historians' selectivity is impossible to quantify. It is impossible to prove that assessments were not predicated on what was regarded to be comprehensive testimony, except in cases when the historian admits to this themselves. As to why all available testimony was not acknowledged in the finished narrative, we ought to recall that these texts were written in a milieu that prized reducing the complex and multifarious to the essential and truthful. The beauty of the model was that it made it possible to pinpoint the one agent whose one sinful action had set a reverse in motion. To be sure, that agent might have committed, or assisted in causing, further transgressions, but there was clearly a belief that any such

[130] Suger, *Vita Ludouici grossi regis*, 196-7. *HE*, vol 6, 236 n. 1.
[131] See: C. A. J. Coady, *Testimony: A Philosophical Study* (Oxford, 1994).
[132] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 29-30. P. A. Hayward, 'The importance of being ambiguous: innuendo and legerdemain in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum* and *Gesta pontificum Anglorum*', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 33 (2011), 75-102, at 88-90.

propagation tended to emanate out of one primarily culpable action. Elegant, singular examples were thus sufficient to illustrate causality, whilst also signifying deeper character truths.

Raw testimony might well have been more comprehensive than the finished narratives betray, but redaction and omission of some of this might not have violated contemporary standards of truth. To a certain extent, the historians' exposition of the model was motivated by a desire to advocate for those to whom they owed some worldly allegiance. We have already seen that Orderic Vitalis wrote, in part, to excuse the failings of his abbatial patrons. William of Malmesbury did little to avoid the impression that he wrote his *Historia nouella* from a viewpoint favourable towards his patron, Earl Robert of Gloucester.[133] Did this sometimes outweigh interest in arriving at the truth of the divine nature? Was the temptation to massage testimony in service of political causes or institutional advantage too great? Was the truth, even when understood in light of the model, too uncomfortable? And should the ostensibly subjective judgement calls over what evidence to include or omit disqualify any regard for historical writing as a sincere attempt to understand the objective truth of the world by means of empirical observation? No, for even if a 'comprehensive' body of testimony was wilfully manipulated, it would be wrong to deduce that subsequent professions of truthfulness were insincere or merely rhetorical. Just as the minutiae of events were usually omitted for rhetorical expediency, the composition of a narrative that contradicted the literal sense of most of its sources might still have been regarded as a legitimate and truthful act. For example, Suger might have believed, according to the hierarchy of causes, that the English advance had been primarily responsible for the burning of the barn, even if he knew full-well that it was the French who put the torches to the fabric.[134] In this case, the English presence still constituted a cause, and, to the author's mind, the important one. If the nuance got lost in the final formulation of expression, and he chose to construe the causation of events in a way that did not reflect the letter of the evidence, then it was arguably no less truthful than any of the countless other examples of the model being deployed with economy. Determination of the most responsible cause sometimes proved subjective, but all available evidence suggests that it was a subjectivity predicated on a sincere adherence to contemporary standards of truth and perceived laws of causation.

The historians sometimes defended themselves from potential charges of subjective bias or, in the terms of the age, tending towards falsehood for the gain it could bring. William of Malmesbury's prologue to Book IV of the *Gesta regum* rebuts any such accusation.

> Most people, I know, will think it unwise to have turned my pen to the history of the kings of my own time; they will say that in the works of this character truth is often disastrous and falsehood profitable, for in writing of contemporaries it is dangerous to criticize, while praise is sure of a welcome. Thus it is, they maintain, that with everything nowadays tending to the worse rather than the better, an author will pass over the evils that meet him on every hand, to be on the safe side, and as for good actions, if he cannot find any, he will invent them to secure a good reception. Others, judging my industry by their own lack of it, reckon me unequal to the greatness of my task, and try to poison my enterprise by their insinuations. Moved by the reasoning of one party or the

[133] See: *HN*, 2-3. *GR*, 10-13.
[134] OV, vol. 6, 236 n. 1.

> contempt of the other, I had long since retired to a life of leisure, content to remain silent; but after a period of illness, my old love of study plucked me by the ear and laid its hand on my shoulder, for I was incapable of doing nothing, and knew not how to devote myself to those business cares which are so unworthy of a man of letters … I will so summarize doings, both good and bad, that as my ship speeds unhurt between Scylla and Charybdis, my information may perhaps be found wanting, but not my judgement … I will tell therefore in this book, the fourth of my whole work, whatever is to be told about William [Rufus], son of William the Great, in such a way that the truth of history is not shaken, and no slur is cast upon the majesty of the Crown.[135]

William's admonition that 'my information may perhaps be found wanting, but not my judgement' might be interpreted as an acknowledgement of the limitations of available testimony. Yet, it seems more probable that through those words William sought to defend his economical but veritable articulation of causation and culpability. Elsewhere, he stated that 'it has been my intention [as a historian] to pass over everything that did not fully come to my knowledge'.[136] The intensity of William's professions of truthfulness seem to have been founded on what he truly believed was a solid epistemic foundation. It is important to reiterate, too, that William was a master of saying things without actually saying them. Narrating the life and times of King William II Rufus without drawing the ire of his still-living family and associates, and whilst simultaneously rebutting the providential scepticism he represented, clearly tested these talents, as his eventual decision to redact the *Gesta regum* and *Gesta pontificum* proves. William denies that he was influenced by the lowly attractions of subjective bias, and instead hoists an ensign of truth (*ueritas*).[137] Opening Book VI of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, Orderic addressed his own critics in a similar tone.

> The human mind needs to be constantly occupied with useful learning if it is to keep its keenness; it needs too by reflecting on past and interpreting present events to equip itself with the qualities necessary to face the future. Everyone should daily grow in knowledge of how he ought to live … Often events that seem incredible come to the ears of the ignorant; and strange things occur unexpectedly to the men of our time; shallow minds find them obscure and can only understand them by reflecting on past events. So the learned explore the dark places of the past; they cherish and value highly whatever they think profitable to the well-disposed mind. They do their work out of good will and reveal past events to future generations ungrudgingly, though sometimes idle and ignorant men attack their achievements with wolfish fangs. So sometimes the victims, wounded by the teeth of the envious, lose heart and give up the investigation they have begun, leaving the subject, perhaps, to vanish into oblivion … we find Jerome and Origen and other learned doctors deploring the cavils of their critics in their defences; and we regret bitterly that for this reason many great events are hidden from

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[135] *GR*, 540-543 [Scio plerisque ineptum uideri quod gestis nostri temporis regnum scribendis stilum applicuerim, dicentibus quod in eiusmodi scriptis sepe naufragatur ueritas et suffragatur falsitas; quippe presentium mala periculose, bona plausibiliter dicuntur. Eo fit, inquiunt, ut, quia modo omnia magis ad peius quam ad melius sunto procliuia, scriptor obuia mala propter metum pretereat et bona, si non sunt, propter plausum confingat. Sunt alii qui nos ex segnitie sua metientes impares tanto muneri existimant, et hoc studium praua sugillatione contaminant. Quapropter iam pridem uel illorum ratiocinio uel istorum fastidio perculsus in otium concesseram, silentio libenter adquiescens; sed dum aliquandiu solutus inertia uacassem, rursus solitus amor studiorum aurem uellit et manum iniecit, propterea quod nec nichil agere possem, et istis forensibus et homine litterato indignis curis me tradere non nossem ... sic enim bene et secus acta perstringam ut, quasi inter Scillam et Caribdim illeso uolante nauigio, nichil desit sententiae, etsi aliquid deesse putetur historiae ... Dicam igitur in hoc libro, qui huius operis est quartus, quicquid de Willelmo filio Willelmi Magni dici poterit, ut nec ueritas rerum titubet nec principalis decoloretur maiestas].

[136] *HN*, 22-3 [consilium fuit preterire quae ad nostram notitiam non integre peruenere].

[137] *GR*, 542-3 [ueritas].

> sight, since learned scholars would rather remain idle than strive to discover hidden truth and then endure the scurrilous attacks of their denigrators. Let those, I beg, cease speaking and be silent, who neither produce anything of their own nor accept the work of others with good will, nor peacefully correct what displeases them … How abundant is the material for any writer to record, of the condition and fall of man, of the chances and changes of the fleeting world, of the vicissitudes of our prelates and princes, of peace and war, and of the varying reverses that continually befall mankind … But we must write truthfully of the world as it is and of human affairs, and a chronicle must be composed in praise of the Creator and just Governor of all things. For the eternal Creator still works without ceasing and marvellously orders all things; and of his glorious acts let each one according to his ability and desire duly relate what is shown him from on high.[138]

Orderic's words speak, again, to his desire to investigate the ordering of the world by God. They also relay his defence against charges of subjectivity or bias, or scepticism about the value of historical investigation altogether. Orderic asked his critics to either ignore his work or else benignly correct what displeased them. Implicit in that defence is his confidence that, unlike such denigrators, he wrote for the right reasons and, being unswayed by anything except the longing for truth, would contribute towards it. Orderic's confidence in his epistemic foundation and the truthfulness of his course was shared by William of Malmesbury, who drew on the image of fortune's wheel to explain. This came as William dismissed Roger of Salisbury's justification for having broken his oath to the Empress Matilda.

> I myself have often heard Roger, bishop of Salisbury, saying that he was released from the oath he had taken to the empress, because... [details]. In saying this I would not wish it to be thought that I accepted the word of a man who knew how to adapt himself to any occasion according as the wheel of fortune turned; I merely, like a truthful (*uerax*) historian, add to my narrative what was thought by people in my part of the country.[139]

In these words, William tacitly juxtaposes himself against the bishop who disregarded singular truth in adapting with the turns of fortune's wheel.[140] He, unlike them, was not perturbed by fortune, and by extension he conducted himself and erected his true history atop the sure foundation and

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[138] *HE*, vol. 3, 212-15 [Humani acumen ingenii semper indiget utili sedimine competenter exerceri, et preterita recolendo presentiaque rimando ad futura feliciter uirtutibus instrui. Quisque debet quemadmodum uiuat cotidie discere ... Plerumque multa quae uelut inaudita putantur rudium auribus insonant; et noua modernis in repentinis casibus frequenter emanant; in quibus intellectuales inexpertorum oculi nisi per reuolutionem transactorum caligant. Studiosi ergo abdita inuestigant, et quicquid benignae menti profuturum autumant, pie amplexantes magni existimant. Ex beniuolentia laborant, et preterita posteris sine inuidia manifestant; quorum sollertiam dente canino nonnunquam inertes lacerant. Vnde inuidiosi quidam inuidorum morsibus iniurati plerunque torpescunt; et ab incepto specimine quod aeterno fortassis silentio recludetur desistunt ... Hieronimum et Origenem aliosque doctores de cauillationibus oblatratorum in allegationibus suis conquestos cernimus, et contristamur quod hac de causa nostris multa precipua subtracta sunt obtutibus; dum dicaces sophistae malebant in ocio quiescere, quam abdita diserte proferendo laborare; et maledicis corrodentium latratibus patere ... De humano statu lapsuque, de labentis seculi uolubilitate, et prelatorum principumque nostrorum uicissitudine; de pace seu bello et multimodis qui non deficiunt casibus terrigenarum, cuilibet dicanti thema scribendi est copiosum ... De cursu tamen seculi et rebus humanis ueraciter scribendum est; atque ad laudem creatoris et omnium rerum iusti gubernatoris cronographya pangenda est. Aeternus enim conditor usque modo operatur et omnia mire disponit; de cuius gloriosis actibus quisque pro suo libitu et posse pie promat quod et diuinitus inspiratum fuerit].

[139] *HN*, 10-13 [Ego Rogerium Salesberiensem episcopum sepe audiui dicentem, solutum se a sacramento quod imperatrici fecerat ... [Nec uero haec iccirco dixerim quod credam uera fuisse uerba hominis, qui se unicuique tempori pro uolubilitate fortunae accommodare nosset; sed sicut uerax historicus opinionem prouintialium scriptis appono].

[140] Another bishop, Wilfrid, was even more explicitly accused of turning with the wheel. See: *GP*, 508-11.

prudential certitude that was found in God, i.e. at the centre of the wheel. Whilst the historians countenanced that their works might be attacked by detractors who might claim subjective bias or denigrate the utility of investigation predicated on empirical testimony, they were convinced that they served an end that transcended what they saw as lowly subjectivity.

*Assent to the sins of others*

The reverse engendered by a specific sin was sometimes visited upon others than just that sinner themselves. The incontrovertible truth of God's absolute justice mandated that any who were affected by fortune must have done something to deserve it. It is unthinkable that the same historians who went to the lengths they did in order to refute providential scepticism would have abandoned that principle of cosmic justice. How, though, did the historians account for the visitation of reverses on apparent innocents? The theological justification for collective punishment, whether divine or human, was a topic of some considerable debate during the twelfth century.[141] By the late-twelfth century, some decades after the historians had laid their pens to rest, three explanations predominated in the universities. The first held that everyone deserved fortune's reverses because, inevitably, every human in the lapsarian state committed some voluntary sin of their own.[142] An individual might not have engendered the reverse, but it might still be justly visited upon them to punish their own sin and spur them to correct their course. In this vein, some cited the principle of ethical imitation to causally link the culpable sin to the punishable conduct of all of those eventually affected.[143] An alternative view was that temporal punishments could justly be visited on those who had permissively assented or been actively complicit in the culpable sin, and it was this assent/complicity, and not some other sin of their own, that justified their experience of a contingency.[144] The third interpretation cited some combination of the above, and attached fault to each member of a community for failing to act to prevent the sin of its leaders.[145] The historians' emphasis on culpable sin seems to have favoured the latter interpretation, and especially since it tended to be the subjects of leaders who facilitated their sinful acts such as the waging of illicit wars and the mistreatment of the churchmen. The bible holds that no Christian should participate in the sins of others, but what was held to constitute participation was open to interpretation.[146] Episodes narrated in the histories seem to imply that that even passive assent was deemed to qualify. For instance, William of Malmesbury suggested that when Henry I had tried to free his friend Robert Fitz Hamon from captivity in Bayeux, his troops had burned the town and cathedral.[147] There is no suggestion that Robert was actively complicit in that act, and indeed he was imprisoned at the time that it was initiated. Nevertheless, William declared him complicit in

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[141] For discussion, see: P.D. Clarke, *The Interdict in the Thirteenth Century: A Question of Collective Guilt* (Oxford, 2007), especially 29-49; 57. P. D. Clarke, 'Peter the Chanter, Innocent III, and theological views on collective guilt and punishment', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 52 (2001), 1-20. P. D. Clarke, 'A question of collective guilt: popes, canonists, and the interdict c. 1140-1250', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung* 85 (1999), 104-146.
[142] Clarke, 'theological views on collective guilt and punishment', 4-6.
[143] Clarke, 'theological views on collective guilt and punishment', 4-6.
[144] Clarke, *The Interdict*, especially 21-50.
[145] Clarke, 'theological views on collective guilt and punishment', 9-12.
[146] 1 Timothy 5:22
[147] Forster, WoM Article, 30-31.

Henry's sin. It was that complicity, rather than some other unspecified sin of his own, that William believed justified his subsequent reverse.

> [After the burning of Bayeux, later during Henry I's campaign in Normandy,] Robert Fitz Hamon was wounded on the temple with a pike and lost his reason, surviving some considerable time in a state of dotage. They say he deserved his punishment, because in order to set him free King Henry burnt the town of Bayeux with its principal church.[148]

William's interpretation seems to emphasise that each bore a responsibility to manage their associations, and take whatever steps were possible to minimise their risk of assent to others' sins. There were various ways one might have taken practical steps towards this end. Withdrawal from the world into a monastery was one option. Another was the disassociation from some other sinful community, situation, or even a whole kingdom. Anselm of Canterbury, for instance, retreated into exile when it became apparent to him that remaining in England was tantamount to complicity in William Rufus' sins.[149] Most would not have been able to take practical action to withdraw from complicity, but that fact only redoubled the censure that powerful sinners deserved. This attributive understanding of culpability for fortune's reverses further emphasised the desirability of universal ethical restoration.

As noted, the justifications for divine and human collective punishment became a theme of canonistic and theological debate during the later twelfth century. In the words of P.D. Clarke.

> When twelfth-century theologians and canonists considered the question of collective guilt and punishment, they spoke in terms of one suffering for another's sin. This is perfectly understandable given that they believed that all humans inherited the sin of Adam. For this original sin all humans suffered physical death, but, as St Augustine had taught, if they had been baptised and remained in a state of grace at death, they were safe in eternity. From this teaching Abelard and subsequent theologians, including Peter the Chanter and Stephen Langton, drew the conclusion that God punished sons for their fathers' sins with a temporal penalty, that is suffering confined to this life (which might include their own death), but never by an eternal penalty, such as damnation.[150]

In practical terms, the distinction between spiritual and temporal penalties helped to alleviate any anxiety or even unrest that might have arisen from implying that one could suffer a direct spiritual penalty on account of the sins of another. Yet, as the historians and others were keenly aware, a temporal penalty often constituted an indirect spiritual penalty.[151] The Boethian justification for the goodness of fortune's reverses – that they are good since they prompt people they affect to return to or maintain a good course –is only valid when sin is regarded as a matter-of-fact. It was much more difficult to reconcile that explanation with the reality the historians sketch – that fortune's reverses are engendered by sins that were sometimes demonstrably avoidable. Additionally, that contingencies occasioned by the reverses that sin engenders often undo what would otherwise have

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[148] *GR*, 722–3 [preterea Rodbertum filium Haimonis, qui conto ictus timpora hebetatusque ingenio, non pauco tempore quasi captus mente supervixit. Merito multatum ferunt. quod eius liberandi causa rex Henricus Baiocas civitatem cum principali aecclesia ignibus absumpserit].
[149] *GP*, 142-51.
[150] Clarke, 'Collective guilt and punishment', 3.
[151] Orderic on fortune intruding in the cloister, Malmesbury on monastery.

been good actions. More on those points below. Certainly, Robert of Lewes for one was categorical in his subscription to the view that the temporal punishment for a sin was justly visited down to, at least, the second generation.

> …the Earl of Gloucester and his supporters are to be blamed in the highest degree and particularly censured for rash presumption because they not only violated a church, that most familiar refuge in all ages for men's lives and for the oppressed, but also with swords unsheathed dragged from the altar and delivered over to captivity those who had fled within in the hope of safety and preservation. Nor was this unpunished. For God, who justly has regard for misfortunes unjustly brought upon his own, who repays the wicked their deserts in the second generation, exercised a most bitter vengeance upon them. The son of Robert Earl of Gloucester, the peculiar glory and honour of his race, died not long afterwards, carried off by an untimely death.[152]

The visitation of the father's sin upon the son was the scriptural nexus of the debate around collective divine punishment, since two scriptural verses, Exodus 20:5 and Ezekiel 18, appeared contradictory.[153] The God of Exodus 20:5 declares that He visits punishments for sin down to the third and even fourth generations, 'I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me'.[154] By contrast, Ezekiel 18 presents a model of divine justice that more narrowly accords individual conduct, 'The soul that sinneth, the same shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and the father shall not bear the inquity of the son: the justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him'.[155] Augustine had attempted to harmonise this dissonance, reasoning that the God of Exodus 20:5 delayed punishment out of benevolence, affording sinners the opportunity to repent.[156] In so doing, he acknowledged that individuals suffer temporal penalties as a direct consequence of others' sins. The angle of his approach implies that he believed Exodus 20:5 better described lived experience. Augustine's explanation was noted by the twelfth-century canonist Gratian and elaborated on by the eminent theologian Peter the Chanter, who emphasised that in visiting punishment cross-generationally God induced a father to repent than see his child or grandchild suffer.[157] This gloss brings the problem with Boethius' precept into clearer focus. Divine punishment, involving fortune's reverses, is only good in so far as it is mandated. It is manifestly a much higher good to live virtuously, avoid sin, and not require that divine correction. Conceptualising divine justice in this way encouraged communities to take measures against miscreants within their ranks, either by persuasion to reform or, more

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[152] *GS*, 146-9 [comes Glaornensis suique fautores culpandi, temerariaeque praesumptionis praecipue notandi, quia templum animarum duntaxat et depressorum notissimum omni aetate refugium non solum uiolarunt, sed et, qui spe salutis et securitatis causa introrsum confugerant, cum nudis ab altari abstractos gladiis (148) captiuitati addixerunt. Nec impune quidem. Iustus namque calamitatm suis iniuste illatarum respector Deus, qui reddit impiis in caput secundum quod promerentur, acerbissimam in eis exercuit ultionem. Quia Roberti Glaornensis comitis filius, specialis scilicet propagationis suae splendor et decus, immatura non multo post morte praeuentus interiit].
[153] Clarke, 'Collective guilt and punishment', 4.
[154] Exodus 20:5.
[155] Ezekiel 18:20.
[156] Clarke, 'Collective guilt and punishment', 4.
[157] Clarke, 'Collective guilt and punishment', 4-5.

controversially, popular resistance.[158] Because the historians' efforts inducted all reverses of fortune into this model of divine justice, whether reverses proved proximately disadvantageous or *advantageous* to whoever they affected, this placed still further emphasis on each individual's responsibility to prevent/encourage others not to sin. Their confidence in attributing many of those sins to leadership figures accentuated that everyone had a stake in drawing those who made the most consequential actions, leaders, away from sin.

[158] Clarke, 'Collective guilt and punishment', 12-13.

*Community*

The historians identified the free human actions that were responsible for propagating reverses, weaving them into their narratives in order to exemplify the workings of divine justice and establish examples of conduct that ought to be avoided. They often categorised these actions according to the vices that had given rise to them. William of Malmesbury identified William Fitz Osbert's lust, and William Rufus' obstinacy, for instance.[159] This reinforced the suggestion that actions that engendered reverses were contrary to God and hence were sins. Guidance of this sort could be profitable to any who received it, but it cannot have been lost to the historians that the causal potency of individuals' actions spanned a vast spectrum. In shaping the course of history, not everyone's actions had exerted equal influence. William of Malmesbury penned twin texts that dealt with deeds of the kings and the deeds of bishops in part because it was the actions of leaders, both secular and religious, that had proven the most consequential to the course of history. The causal range of most individuals' actions was fairly limited, while a single transgression on the part of a leader might engender a reverse that could affect a whole nation. For example, as we have seen, William of Malmesbury was clear in situating culpability for the *White Ship* disaster with sinful actions that arose from Henry I's injustice. Besides granting William Adelin too much authority at too young an age, Henry had also given the hand of his daughter to a demonstrably sinful Emperor who would dare to threaten the Pope with physical violence.[160] From the ramifications of these two missteps had issued the vicissitudes of Stephen's reign during which, as vice bred vice, reverses and contingency proliferated. In the terms of the model, causal range was much more than a descriptor of purely material human causation, as modern physics might understand it. The causal chain also accommodated God's disposition of Providence, and often this included visitations of fortune that had been engendered - from a human perspective 'caused' - by some sin committed hundreds of miles away. All of the English people were a part of the kingdom of England, but not all were part of the community of Malmesbury Abbey, or the city of Bristol, or the hamlet of Reach. Visitations brought down by the sins of leaders of these smaller communities might affect their members and any who assented to deal and interact with them. Yet, when a national leader sinned, *all* the nation's subjects were deemed complicit in assenting to that sin and so *all* were exposed to a potential turn of fortune. The *White Ship* episode, as well as the descriptions of the degeneracy of Rufus' court, illustrate that overall causal responsibility for the sin of a member of a community was attributed to its leader for having given improper or inadequate guidance.[161] The sins and vices of leaders were thus highly consequential to the wellbeing and aspirations of communities both because they instigated reverses that tended to affect many people, and because they propagated a harmful example. How though, besides the above summary, did the model relate

[159] See, for instance: *GR*, 474-5; 554-5.
[160] *HN*, 10-11. *GR*, 762-5.
[161] *HE*, vol. 4, 186-9.

to contemporary theory surrounding community and communal ends? Further, and while accepting that the ethical lessons embedded in the histories were hoped to benefit individuals that imbibed them, what was the maximal extent of the historians' restorative ambitions?

A recent study argued that the monastic historians sought to 'transcend' rather than resolve worldly difference and discord.[162] This study was the corollary of a broader argument that historians' primary ends were of a religious nature.[163] As we have seen, some earlier scholars had seen William of Malmesbury's narration of scepticism and adoption of terms like *fortuna* as indicative that he also doubted the church's claims about Providence. They believed that William rendered events in moral terms for the sake of irony, placing more stock in mundane human causation and the chance element of the universe than in events' conformity to any providential plan. More recently, studies have given more credence to what the historians actually tell us about their religious convictions and aspirations, especially their affirmations that they wrote to glorify God and for the moral edification of their audience.[164] This trend has prompted the need to explain how the edificatory end of ethical historical writing accorded with reflections on and expositions of the futility of lapsarian man's restorative efforts. In an important recent study, Sigbjørn Sønnesyn sought to show how the historians harmonised this apparent incongruity. In Sønnesyn's view, the historians recognised that secular disorder was inevitable, but that moral instruction could help to lessen it.[165] He suggested that in narrating worldly vicissitudes and their attendant undesirable causes and consequences, the monastic historians hoped to cultivate a transcendent unity amongst those of their brethren who had rejected any part in the outside world.[166] Sønnesyn's assessment is an insightful guide to contemporary theories of community and communal ends. Yet, as I intend to show, in emphasising the supposed transcendence of historical writing and monastic life in general, it understates the extent to which the historians still considered themselves and their ends part of, and subject to, the world and its vicissitudes. They were very keenly aware that spiritual progress, on whichever side of the cloister walls, remained imperilled by moral lapses brought on by fortune's shifts. I also call for a re-evaluation of the historians' ambitions. I argue that their efforts towards developing a model of the causes of worldly vicissitudes was an integral part of a higher ambition - to theorise a way to calm and still fortune's reverses. Scholarship has never countenanced that the historians' deliberative efforts were intended to preclude fortune's reverses – worldly vicissitudes - altogether. I hope to show in what follows, here and throughout this study, that armed with the insight of the model the historians set the bar rather higher than Sønnesyn and other scholars have recognised.

First, to review Sønnesyn's exposition of contemporary theories of community and communal bonds. His analysis identifies three 'levels' of communal bond that shaped the

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[162] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 167-87.
[163] Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, throughout.
[164] For instance: Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*.
[165] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', especially 176-87.
[166] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', especially 180-87.

historians conceptualisation of intersecting communities: the ethnic, the moral-political, and the spiritual.[167] The first of these, the ethnic, refers to bonds that were thought to arise innately from the identity one inherits at birth. That identity could be homogenous or synthesised from some combination of groups into which one was born.[168]

> One is born into already existing families, local communities, wider political units and what we today would call ethnic groups – all with their characteristic forms of communication, immediate and long-term aims and goals, and a set of basic values and beliefs. From the point of view of the individual one is born with a set of given identities based on these widening, concentric circles of association.[169]

One of these concentric circles of association was thought to be that of the *gens*, which tended to be defined by one's geographic origin, one's blood, or by the nation into which one was born.[170] Yet, these criteria were unstable and sometimes difficult to demarcate. Both Orderic Vitalis and William of Malmesbury were living proof that the mixing of blood after the conquest problematised the clear delineation of ethnic identity, and they knew it.[171] Mass migration and the assimilation of individuals into another *gens* further muddied the concept.[172] Overall, ethnic communal bonds tended to be fairly loosely defined, and were regarded as somewhat fluid. They were typically the basis atop which other, stronger bonds could be formed.

Predominating in everyday experience was the second tier of communal bond, the moral-political. These were living bonds that could strengthen and diminish, and so were perpetually reforged and cultivated as events unfolded.[173] The classical and patristic *loci* of this concept were Cicero and Augustine.[174] In fact, Cicero's definition of a community, which he termed a *populus*, disregarded ethnicity and geographic origin entirely.[175] In Cicero's words, a community was 'the coming together of a crowd bound together by a common view on what is right and an association of common utility'.[176] Augustine assessed the Ciceronian definition in Book XIX of *De ciuitate Dei*, adjudging that the relative goodness of a people corresponded with the goodness of the object of their 'common view on what is right', i.e. the object of their love.[177] Love of virtue was good and praiseworthy in and of itself, Augustine reasoned, but the most perfect community heeded the demand of justice to render everything to the pursuit of God.[178] By updating the foremost classical model of community in this manner, Augustine offered a template for Christian communal life, whilst simultaneously castigating the pagan Romans, Greeks, Assyrians, and so on, for having

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[167] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 169.
[168] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 170.
[169] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 170.
[170] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 171.
[171] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 171-3.
[172] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 171.
[173] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 173-9.
[174] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 167-8.
[175] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 173.
[176] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 173.
[177] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 173. *DCD*, 890. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 400.
[178] *DCD*, 890-93. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 400-404.

arrayed themselves in pursuit of exclusively earthly ends.[179] Sønnesyn adds that William of Malmesbury portrayed the conversion of the English to Christianity as an important step along a truly civilizing, Godward path.[180] Christianity helped to unify the range of ideals, values, and ends that political leaders had previously stood for, and arrayed those in service of still-higher ends. It is important to be clear here that this was inevitably a pursuit of worldly advancement referred to the highest end, and not a pure and unmitigated act of obeisance to true justice in-and-of itself.[181] People were unified in service to their leader, as material goods and temporal ends were still the most immanent concerns of even the most pious. Despite their conversion, the English nation's 'collective view on what was right' was still steered by their assent to their *leader's* adherence to or dereliction of justice. From the perspective of the twelfth century, past leaders had all proven imperfect in their rule for various reasons, and it followed that the unity of those bound by bonds of service to them had proven imperfect. One supposedly paradigmatic guarantor of that imperfection was the 'inherent' fragility of moral-political communal bonds, which were vulnerable to reverses that threatened the communal attainment of temporal ends and, by extension, people's obeisance to even the most virtuous of leaders.[182] Manifestly, a leader's agency to pursue even the best of ends had always remained hostage to contingencies occasioned by fortune.[183] A leader's failure to achieve proximate objectives risked popular support, especially when the people themselves experienced setbacks and wretchedness as a consequence, or were tempted by the promises of rivals.[184] In Sønnesyn's assessment, it was patent that moral-political bonds 'had never been realized in their ideal form', and, critically, *never could be*.[185]

> Orderic maintained that unity founded on the political level of human bonds would never be strong enough to ensure harmony and justice – the world of secular and ecclesiastical politics was as fraught with uncertainty and distress as it had always been: 'while I see the princes of this world overwhelmed by misfortunes and disastrous setbacks ... what more shall I say?' Political bonds [alone] ... were insufficient to bring full unity, to allow brothers to live together in *unum*.[186]

The secular imperfection of moral-political bonds is contrasted with the a still higher level of communal bond – the spiritual. Sønnesyn suggests that spiritual bonds were believed to form out of a shared love for the highest end in-and-of itself. He explains that

> Only when the supreme good is loved for its own sake and to the exclusion of all that is contrary to it may a true order of love arise – the authentic assent on the part of individual monks to the spirit of the rule is what creates such an ideal form of community. The most supreme form of community, then, is to William [of Malmesbury] the spiritual community of like-minded human beings who share a

[179] *DCD*, 890-91. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 400-401.
[180] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 174-7.
[181] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 174-7.
[182] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 173-9.
[183] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 177-9.
[184] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 177-9.
[185] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 178-9. See also: D. Bates, *William the Conqueror* (New Haven CT and London, 2016), 14.
[186] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 177.

> common way of life directed exclusively at attaining the highest and ultimate good for humanity, the eternal beatific vision of God.[187]

In other words, the strongest bonds of unity arises from circumstances that facilitate the exclusive pursuit of higher goods and does not require attention toward the pursuit of lower goods and ends that are subject to fortune's interference. Referring to the highest level of spiritual unity, as fostered in a monastic community, Sønnesyn explained that

> To achieve this level of unity, one needs to progress through the inferior levels – it is by starting from natural unity and progressing through moral unity that spiritual unity, the highest form of unity within human grasp, is achieved, each new level of unity resting on the previous ones.[188]

Sønnesyn suggests that monastic rules instituted a singular focus toward attaining the highest end for its own sake, and mentions that the influential early Patristic John Cassian had taught that spiritual bonds were best advanced under conditions of communal cohabitation within a single house.[189] The preeminent role of historical writing in all of this was, supposedly, to strive for the discernment of manifest truth in creation, and to unify those who reflected on that truth. In Sønnesyn's words, 'history finds its consummation in liturgy, where the discord narrated is resolved into spiritual unity'.[190] Moral truth, that could inform conduct, was but one aspect of this whole. Yet, a point that needs further emphasis is that spiritual bonds could also be cultivated in the secular world, for all Christians were part of the living body of Christ, the Church *in toto*.[191] Another is that the cultivation of spiritual unity and the striving for high ends remained predicated, whether inside the cloister or without, on the possession of lower goods and the pursuit of lower ends. In this regard there was no hard dichotomy that separated the monastic life from the secular. Monks might be less reliant on those lower goods that were subject to fortune's interference, but the Stoic ideal of absolute interiority was incongruent with the pragmatism of prevailing Christian thought. Augustine recognised this, and wrote that while the higher spiritual goods ought to be *preferred*, many lower goods were essential and so ought to be pursued and, when possessed, *referred* to the attainment of those higher goods.[192] This was to affirm that the attainment of higher goods was predicated on possession of an adequate measure of lower goods – in particular those things that facilitated life and, indeed, a life that pursued truth.[193] Some of these essential lower goods were bodily, the foremost being properly functioning eyes, ears, and general health. Some were extrabodily, including shelter, food, parchment, books, and even weapons. All of these temporal goods, in both categories, were external and thus subject to fortune's disruptions.[194] This is to illustrate that that monastic and secular communities alike needed to be concerned with lower

[187] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 182.
[188] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 185.
[189] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 180-81.
[190] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 185.
[191] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 183.
[192] Augustine's views on the proper utility of worldly goods is discussed in: J. Clair, *Discerning the Good in the Letters and Sermons of Augustine* (Oxford, 2016), especially 35-8.
[193] Clair, *Discerning the Good*, especially 37-8.
[194] Clair, *Discerning the Good*, 146.

goods, and with engendering a broader community in which the pursuit of those was only impeded by contingency as infrequently as possible. Sønnesyn's argument risks implying that the perfection of human nature intrinsically depended on the homogenisation of activity and means towards the highest of ends, but Augustine recognised that the very summit of human nature was not necessarily a purely contemplative life. He wrote.

> As for the three kinds of life, the life of leisure, the life of action, and the combination of the two, anyone, to be sure, might spend his life in any of these ways without detriment to his faith, and might thus attain to the everlasting rewards. What does matter is the answers to those questions: What does a man possess as a result of his love of truth? And what does he pay out in response to the obligations of Christian love? For no one ought to be so leisured as to take no thought in that leisure for the interest of his neighbour, nor so active as to feel no need for the contemplation of God. The attraction of a life of leisure ought not to be the prospect of lazy inactivity, *but the chance for the investigation and discovery of truth*, on the understanding that each person makes some progress in this, and does not grudgingly withhold his discoveries from another.[195]

Indeed, the historians mixed contemplation with action borne out of the compulsion of love.

> We see then that it is love of truth that looks for sanctified leisure, while it is the compulsion of love that undertakes righteous engagement in affairs. If this latter burden is not imposed on us, we should employ our freedom from business in the quest for truth and in its contemplation, while if it is laid upon us, it is to be undertaken because of the compulsion of love.[196]

It is difficult to imagine any in this life who would not have felt themselves subject to the compulsion of love to some extent, especially those attuned to the various travails faced by the communities of which they were part. To be sure, a monk's need to care for his brethren would have been one source of such compulsion, but it was also driven by bonds of neighbourly love that transcended the house. Sønnesyn does offer one example - the conduct of intercessory liturgy.[197] The propagation of morally-profitable exempla and the sharing of truth revealed through contemplative effort seems also to have been constituent of this endeavour. Certainly, Orderic and William did not write for their houses in isolation, but addressed a much broader audience.[198] In my estimation, Sønnesyn's argument does not adequately acknowledge the extent of monastic communities' dependency on and aspiration toward external moral-political stability. It instead implies that a house was a moral-political island, absolved of concern for the procurement and

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[195] *DCD*, 880. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 387-8 [Ex tribus uero illis uitae generibus, otioso, actuoso et ex (202) utroque composito, quamuis salua fide quisque possit in quolibet eorum uitam ducere et ad sempiterna praemia peruenire, interest tamen quid amore teneat ueritatis, quid officio caritatis inpendat. Nec sic esse quisque debet otiosus ut in eodem otio utilitatem non cogitet proximi, nec sic actuosus ut contemplationem non requirat Dei. In otio non iners uacatio delectare debet, sed aut inquisitio aut inuentio ueritatis, ut in ea quisque proficiat et quod inuenerit ne alteri inuideat]. Emphasis my own.

[196] *DCD*, 880. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 388 [Quam ob rem otium sanctum quaerit caritas ueritatis; negotium iustum suscipit necessitas caritatis. Quam sarcinam si nullus inponit, percipiendae atque intuendae uacandum est ueritati; si autem inponitur, suscipienda est propter caritatis necessitatem; sed nec sic omni modo ueritatis delectatio deserenda est, ne subtrahatur illa suauitas et opprimat ista necessitas].

[197] Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 185.

[198] On Orderic's expectation that he was writing for a wide audience, see: L. Shopkow, *History & Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington D. C., 1997), 231-4. Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, 38-9; 186.

maintenance of the lower goods that were essential for its function. In this, it understates the anxieties of the Benedictine monastic historians who felt that their circumstances and the cohesion of their communities remained perennially vulnerable to fortune's reverses that intruded from without. They demonstrably understood that spiritual advancement, whether within a monastic house or without, would always remain hostage to moral-political turmoil. Always, that is, unless that turmoil could be stilled.

My purpose in making these observations is to reiterate that the theoretical milieu of even cloistered monks would have recognised that the human telos demanded that something be done to help calm worldly disorder outside of the house's walls. Orderic knew that the unifying effect of monastic life could not have transcended the moral-political chaos which characterised the Norman Duchy for much of the early twelfth century. Additionally, it was only the prudent leadership and guidance of Saint Aldhelm that had kept Malmesbury Abbey from 'fortune's whirligig', and his legacy that secured the house it's right to elect its own abbots.[199] The example of Aldhelm attested to belief that the very most prudent of leaders could endeavour to take action to insulate a community from the vicissitudes that disrupted order all around it, but more recent history had shown that that challenge usually proved too great. I have already mentioned above that the corrupt bishop Roger of Salisbury had revoked abbatial privilege during William's lifetime, and that it was not restored until 1140, after much political effort on the part of the community. Both Orderic and William mentioned examples of monastic communities who they felt had succeeded in instituting and maintaining the most conducive harmony. Orderic's reverence for Thorney Abbey has also been discussed above, and both he and William respected the unity and spiritual benefit that came of the strictness of Cistercian adherence to the monastic rule. In both of these examples, Orderic and William realised that the brothers' advancement had been facilitated by the relative moral-political tranquillity that prevailed in those locales, and that those circumstances had been brought about through good leadership.

Much of this chapter has related to the theoretical responsibility attributed to leaders of communities, and how the development of the model of fortune's operation redoubled that responsibility. We have seen that of all a community's members, it was usually the leader's sins that proved the most consequential. However, the leader was not only held primarily responsible for ensuring that reverses were not *engendered* in the first place, but also for minimising the *consequences* of whatever contingencies were encountered. Briefly, I intend to explain why reverses were deemed so inimical to unity of will and the ability to attain good ends, and describe the specificities of the responsibilities that leaders bore to minimise those consequences. I will speak of the need to minimise communal exposure to disunifying impulses by means of prudent contingency planning and steadfast example. Disunifying impulses can be understood as those temptations to injustice and hence sin that arise from a failure to recognise the true worth and order of goods. They

[199] *GP*, 578-9 [uolubilitate fortunae].

diminish reason's capacity to control and subject the passions.[200] Fortune's disruptions are an egregious contributor to individuals' failures to recognise the true worth of goods and order their ends appropriately.[201] As a result, the contingent world is perceived to be incongruent with rational expectation. As reason struggles, our passions and cupidity are fired and overtake it.[202] To give but one example: when a fire breaks out in our home, we are filled with fear that will often lead us away from what are rationally the best courses to pursue in that moment. In this manner, contingencies fire the passions to supersede reason and dictate actions that lead to sin and the divergence of the individual will from the commonwealth.[203] The first means of minimising exposure to such disunifying impulses is prudent contingency planning - securing appropriate reserves of those essential extrabodily goods that are subject to fortune's disruption, and avoiding courses whose exposure to fortune is well attested.[204] This has a twofold benefit: dampening the affect of reverses' material consequences helps individuals to keep the passions in check, while maintaining a stable supply of whatever goods are essential in striving for the ends that unify communities prevents the breakdown of communal bonds. Leaders also had a responsibility to ensure that they were not themselves turned from the good by contingencies, as that would be to propagate a corrupting example. William of Malmesbury wrote of bishops who had 'turned with fortune' and so had allowed themselves to be drawn from service to God and their dioceses.[205] Sometimes, of course, contingencies were of a magnitude that rendered any practicable material preparation insufficient.[206] In those instances, the best a leader could do was to exercise their courage toward bridling their passions and pursuing the best course they were able to determine. More fully, Good leadership in these instances was a matter of peering through contingency's disruptions, recognising what was truly just, and having the temperance and courage to overcome the passions and act accordingly. Perhaps the best example of this is William of Malmesbury's account of Robert of Gloucester's capture and imprisonment in 1141.

> It was widely reported, and brought him much honour, that no one saw the earl of Gloucester broken in spirit or even gloomy of countenance because of that mischance. Such consciousness of his lofty rank did he breathe, that he could not be humbled by the outrage of fortune (*fortunae*) . For though he was first lured by flatteries, and afterwards even assailed by threats, he could not be induced to allow negotiations for his release to proceed behind his sister's back.[207]

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[200] J. Brachtendorf, 'Cicero and Augustine on the Passions', *Revue des études Augustiniennes* 43 (1997), 295-307, especially 300-307.
[201] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune*, especially 48-9.
[202] For discussion of Augustine's view of desire for changeable goods, cupidity, see: Clair, *Discerning the Good*, especially 13; 33.
[203] Brachtendorf, 'Cicero and Augustine on the Passions', 295-307, especially 300-307.
[204] For discussion of the commander's obligation to avoid *fortuna*, see: A. Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1978), 128-9. Vegetius, *Empitoma Rei Militaris*, 116-17.
[205] *HN*, 10-13. *GP*, 508-11.
[206] Most obviously, death.
[207] *HN*, 104-9 [Illud uero percelebre magnificumque fuit, quod pro isto euentu nemo comitem Gloecestriae uel infractum mente, uel etiam tristem uultu, uidit. Ita conscientiam altae nobilitatis spirabat, ne se fortunae ludibrio subiceret. Quanuis enim primo blanditiis inuitatus, post etiam minis lacesseretur, numquam tamen inflexus est ut de liberatione sua preter conscientiamd sororis tractaretur].

Contemplation of explanatory history was exceptionally well suited to facilitating the cultivation of exactly this steadfastness in virtue, as William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon extoll.[208] However, it was one thing to successfully subject the passions to reason and to recognise good courses in spite of fortune's disruptions, and another to go on to actually attain the good ends of those courses. Eventually, the consequences of further contingencies outstripped the agency of leaders to cope. I shall elaborate further on the 'consequences of further contingencies' in a later chapter but, in short, fortune continually disrupted the relative goodness of ends and goods in the temporal world and so, for a leader, momentary prudence was rarely enough. Leaders and communities were thus trapped in a futile cycle of dilemmas, impotency, and the inescapability of propagating the whole gyration afresh. It looks from this like no hope could have remained for the world's absolute restoration, and that certainly has been scholarship's tacit assessment. However, throughout the histories there is considerable attention toward a type of leader whose unique attributes were thought capable, I shall argue, of 'breaking the wheel'.[209] Orderic, William, and their contemporaries recognised one type of leader who seemed to possess the agency to do whatever they chose without impediment. The theoretical implications of their belief pursuant to overcoming the challenges indicated by the model are manifold and occupy the remainder of this study.

[208] WoM and HoH prologues.
[209] Phrase recently popularised in the Game of Thrones TV series.

# CHAPTER TWO: CAESAR AND 'NEW CAESARS'

Chapter One has shown that fortune and its manifestation, contingencies, were regarded as *the* fundamental instruments of *all* of the ills of the lapsarian state. The threat of contingency took on a new light once historians had resolved the connection between recent sin and resultant fortune: reverses were not the fault of nameless, faceless sins of ages past, but the product of the recent transgressions of those close to us. I have argued that many coinciding impetuses, many of them common to the intellectual culture of the age but some unique to individual writers, led to the revival of fortune as an explanatory concept. Once its principles had been established through the historians' forensic investigations of testimony, the model imbued historical writing with epideictic force, facilitating the articulation of praise or blame for protagonists' roles in safeguarding against or engendering contingencies. These examples were to serve a deliberative end – to encourage and discourage various courses of action in the present and future. The historians' model of fortune's operation has to date been overlooked or mischaracterised. Scholars have previously noted that *fortuna*'s sudden intrusion into intellectual culture might have been linked to a growing dissatisfaction with the providential orthodoxy, but the product of that dissatisfaction has not always been interpreted appropriately. Some saw *fortuna*'s emergence as constituent of attempts to articulate an ironic view of human effort in the face of an insoluble challenge of contingency or, as they call it, 'chance'.[1] For others, the use of the term was to invoke the Boethian consolation that all events were just, but some only by criteria that escape our understanding.[2] All of these views were predicated on the assumption that the *causes* of specific reverses characterised as *fortuna* were always deemed intractable.

As I have shown, some twelfth-century historians believed that their investigations had been able to consistently locate the specific causes of specific reverses. This breakthrough redoubled what might be accomplished through the investigation, teaching, and practice of ethics. For a start, fortune's interventions could thereafter be blamed on identifiable transgressors. More tantalising still, this mechanism might also have laid the groundwork for communities to unify and work towards minimising their exposure to fortune and contingency, perhaps altogether.

For those ambitions to come to pass, communities needed to be arrayed in authentic pursuit of virtue and order – they needed to will adherence to the truth of the historians' advice,

[1] See discussion in: Introduction, 'Fortune and Providence'.
[2] See discussion in: Introduction, 'Fortune and Providence'.

and be able to act accordingly thereafter. Yet, the irony was that it was fortune itself that made adhering to its own lessons impossible. Observation of the world had revealed that fortune's reverses were engendered by habitual vice but also by honest missteps that resulted in sin. For almost everyone, even those who lived in communities, such as monasteries that were closely united in service of exceptionally well-ordered ends, imperfections and the contingent goodness of ends made missteps inevitable. Therefore, for the historians' ambitions to have any chance of coming to fruition, they needed to identify some circumstance under which a community could be kept from all contingency for some time. Otherwise, the present life was sure to persist in the lapsarian state until the Eschaton. I wish to argue through the remainder of this study that the historians believed they had identified circumstances through which an ethical restoration might surmount these otherwise-impassable obstacles. I suggest that their efforts to this end were drawn to antiquity's archetypical 'fortunate man', Gaius Julius Caesar, who had famously experienced a caesura in fortune's changeability.[3] The next chapter shall unpack the reasons for their especial interest in that trait, but their attentions need to be understood in due context.

Caesar was one of the most controversial and consequential figures in history and, as such, his role in twelfth-century intellectual culture is difficult to overstate. Yet, no dedicated study of Caesar's place in Anglo-Norman intellectual culture has emerged and, as we noted in the general introduction, the few broader European surveys are profoundly outmoded. The task of adequately rectifying this lacuna exceeds the scope of the present study. Here I assess two aspects of the depth and breadth of the period's interest in and utilisation of Caesar. Post-conquest historians went to considerable lengths to amplify existing narratives of the historical Caesar's campaigns. Also, to compare and contrast him with and against the leaders of their own time. What follows first considers interest in the historical Julius Caesar, and the analysis will focus on two major historians' treatments of his invasions of Britain. We shall then turn to consider the phenomenon of characterising leaders as 'New Caesars', taking the evidence for William the Conqueror as our case study. This will involve review of histories and lesser works composed during the late eleventh century, just before *fortuna*'s return to the causal lexicon a generation later. This is also an opportunity to examine those earlier authors' causal paradigms against the arguably rather more sophisticated model of causation that emerged a generation afterwards.

[3] On Ceasar's fortune, see: S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), 112-27

*The historical Caesar and the invasions of Britain*

Legend aside, the written history of Britain began with Caesar's invasions of 55 and 54 BC. That moment, as the genesis of Britain's history, captivated the interest of writers through the Middle Ages and beyond. The *locus classicus* account of the invasions is Caesar's own self-publicising commentary, which emphasised the strange customs and martial tactics of the exotic Britons.[4] Caesar had sought to dazzle his urbane Roman audience in otherizing the Britons so, colouring them as more alien to civilized sensibilities than even the Gauls or Germans. *De bello gallico* was not in general circulation in the Anglo-Norman domain during the twelfth century, and the few copies that existed attracted only a limited audience.[5] Those who did have access to the text were evidently unmoved to propagate its account. Far more influential at the time was a condensed outline of Caesar's account written by Orosius.[6] This was propagated after minor revisions by Bede, as the opening narrative of his seminal *Historia ecclesiastica*.[7] The laconic Orosian-Bedan (henceforth Bedan) tradition did little to elaborate on the story of the ancient British islanders, and eventually their mystique helped to encourage the composition of a more attentive and sympathetic narrative tradition. That tradition was long thought to have started at the pen of a ninth-century Welsh monk, 'Nennius', but more recent work has suggested that it was originally an anonymous compilation dating to around 828AD.[8] For the sake of clarity here, I will refer to it as the Nennian tradition, and its author as Nennius. Both of these traditions proved highly influential during the twelfth century, as evinced by their propagation and amplification in what were likely the two most widely disseminated historical works of the period.[9] The two writers responsible for those reworkings were Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth, who knew of each other's histories but wrote from very different perspectives. I hope to demonstrate in the analysis that follows that the attention they lavished on their narratives speaks to a perceived resonance between Caesar's invasions and the Norman Conquest and its aftermath. In turn, that through their Caesar narratives, the two historians passed comment on the means and ends of the Norman Conquest and its agents, as well as their expectations for the future of the Norman dynasty. Through this, and following-on from the final discussion of the previous chapter, I contend that each author relayed their views on the attainment of moral-political unity, and hence spiritual unity, in a world beset by vicissitudes.

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[4] Julius Caesar, *Comentarii de bello gallico*, ed. and trans. H. J. Edwards, *The Gallic War* (Cambridge MA, 1917), 222-3; 248-53.
[5] Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, 57.
[6] Orosius, 280-81.
[7] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 20-23.
[8] Dumville, "'Nennius" and the *Historia Brittonum*', 78-95.
[9] *HA. HRB.* Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 194-5; 201-2.

Both Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth's histories, the *Historia Anglorum* and *Historia regum Britanniae*, respectively, were national in scope and very widely disseminated – indeed, they were probably the most well known national histories in England at the time.[10] In total, Geoffrey's work is known in 58 twelfth-century manuscripts.[11] After them, no later twelfth-century accounts of Caesar's invasions appeared. The amplification of narrative traditions pertaining to such important events in the nation's history was not a task that anyone could have taken lightly, and it is improbable that they went to such effort without cause and intent. To understand that intent it is first necessary to survey the antecedent traditions – to introduce the historical events themselves, contextualise the divergences between the various accounts and to underscore the significance of Henry and Geoffrey's amplifications.

The first account, as we noted, was Caesar's own *De bello gallico*. It tells us that Caesar's first invasion was a late-season reconnoitre of a Britain that until that time had seemed equally as mysterious to the region's Gallic traders as it had to the Romans.[12] The constitution of this first invasion force was two legions conveyed by around 80 transports, later supplemented by cavalry ferried in 18 delayed transports.[13] Early in the day, Caesar's vanguard reached the coast off certain steep British shores, atop which the natives made a display of their martial might.[14] Realising that the terrain there favoured the defenders, Caesar waited several hours, reformed his flotilla, and then made for a more suitable landing site seven miles down the coast.[15] The Britons managed to track the Roman force along the shore, and contested the disembarkation with a force led by cavalry and charioteers.[16] This passage reads as if it were excusing a defeat, and incorporates a stunning rhetorical *apologia* that is cut off by a dramatic interjection - '*Quod ubi Caesar animadvertit...*', 'When *Caesar* remarked this...'.[17] This seems to emphasise that *Caesar's* actions had turned the tide of battle, and that only his delayed cavalry force 'was lacking to complete the wonted fortune of Caesar'.[18] Caesar relays that the natives treated for peace, presented hostages, and released Caesar's ambassador Commius who they had seized sometime earlier.[19] It is mentioned in an aside that the cavalry transports had been scattered by a storm, and there is a description of the destruction wrought on the other transports by unforeseen tidal patterns.[20] Soon afterwards, the Britons ambushed the foraging Seventh Legion, who were saved again by Caesar's quick thinking, the result

[10] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 194-5; 201-2. *HRB*, vii. *HA*, cxvii-clviii.
[11] 'The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*', *Speculum* 69 (1994), 665-704 (696).
[12] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 204-7.
[13] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 208-9.
[14] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 210-11.
[15] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 210-11.
[16] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 210-13.
[17] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 212-3
[18] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 214-5 [Hoc unum ad pristinam fortunam Caesari defuit].
[19] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 214-7.
[20] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 216-9.

being that the natives were again forced to treat for peace, this time surrendering double the number of hostages.[21] Caesar then withdrew with his legions to the continent.[22]

Caesar reports that his second invasion was better prepared and supported - not by two legions, but five, and two thousand cavalry.[23] Becalmed on the crossing, the flotilla had to row for Britain, but eventually landed unopposed and set up camp.[24] As soon as Caesar and a portion of the army advanced inland, a storm blew up and the anchored Roman fleet suffered serious damage.[25] This delay gave the Britons time to coalesce under the leadership of a certain Cassivellaunus.[26] The commentary then breaks to provide a brief ethnography of the native economy and customs, before presenting the famous 'triangular island' geographic description of Britain and her attendant isles.[27] After some reflections on the tactical difficulties of fighting the Britons, Caesar goes on to narrate how his troops crossed the Thames, mentioning that most of his men swam or waded across to avoid the sharpened defensive stakes laid in and around the river by the natives.[28] This stratagem forced Cassivellaunus to adopt what we would refer to as guerrilla tactics until Mandubrachius, the son of a king of the Trinobantes whom Cassivellaunus had slain, entreated Caesar to ally with him against his old enemy and entrust the rulership of Britain to him.[29] Caesar agreed to this proposal, and finally Cassivellaunus was compelled to sue for terms.[30] Caesar warned the tribes should do each other no harm, set an appropriate tribute to be paid annually to Rome, and departed.[31]

Minor amplifications of Caesar's account were propagated by subsequent Roman writers. Valerius Maximus added an anecdote about the superhuman valour of one of Caesar's soldiers, Scaeva (or Scaevius).[32] When his cohort fled a small island it had been defending, it is said that Scaeva singlehandedly fought off an entire army of Britons.[33] Lucan later eulogised this same soldier's exploits in the Great Roman Civil War.[34] Suetonius offered further anecdotes about Caesar's Britannic escapades. He ascribed Caesar's interest in Britain to a predilection for pearls, and offered nothing of detail about the campaigns save the claims that Caesar had made enquiries

[21] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 220-21; 224-5.
[22] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 224-7
[23] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 242-3.
[24] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 244-5.
[25] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 246-7.
[26] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 248-9.
[27] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 250-51; 606-7.
[28] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 252-7.
[29] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 256-61.
[30] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 258-63.
[31] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 260-3.
[32] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. and trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Memorable Doings and Sayings*, 2 vols. (Cambridge MA, 2000), vol. 1, 258-61. H. Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', *PMLA* 64 (1949), 889-929, at 891.
[33] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta*, vol. 1, 258-61. Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', 891.
[34] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 316-23; 630-1.

in advance, had vanquished the Britons, had exacted hostages and tribute, and had almost lost his entire fleet in a storm.[35]

In the fifth century, the patristic historian Orosius abbreviated Caesar's commentary to underpin one of his seven books against the pagans. Orosius thought the commentary had been Suetonius' work.[36] His account relegates the first invasion to a note of only a few clauses, but is sure to mention the damage suffered by the Roman fleet and to stress that Caesar lost a good part of his infantry and almost all cavalry.[37] Orosius treated the second invasion more fully, but made certain changes: he says that Caesar sailed during Spring; that his ships were of two types rather than one; corrupts Cassivellaunus to 'Cassovellaunus'; and mistakes Q. Laberius Durus, the tribune who lost his life in a battle with the Britons, for the tribune Titus Labienus, who held Gaul in Caesar's absence.[38] Orosius colours Caesar's second invasion in a more decisive light as he implies that Caesar's capture of Cassivellaunus' stronghold, apparently by assault, brought the campaign to an immediate conclusion.[39]

Some of England's early Latin chronicles either skipped over Caesar's invasions or else never mentioned Roman history at all. Gildas professed that he would not dwell on the 'ancient errors common to all races' before Christ's incarnation.[40] Instead, he opened his treatment of Roman Britain with the unqualified judgement that the island was subjugated more by terror than war, and mentioned nothing earlier than Boudicca's rebellion.[41] The narrow scope of Asser's historical work left no need for narration of the distant past.[42]

That said, many chroniclers who wrote before the twelfth century did treat Caesar's invasions. Bede's account, which begins the historical narrative of his *Historia ecclesiastica*, was borrowed directly from Orosius.[43] Bede's only interpolation were remarks that the wooden stakes the Britons had laid to protect the Thames were still visible in his day, and a clarification that after Caesar's departure the Romans did not return to Britain until Claudius's invasion.[44] Despite this clarification, the decisive tone of the account, whether mediated through Orosius or Bede, might have influenced the tenth-century earldorman Æthelweard to write that uninterrupted Roman dominion over Britain had begun with Caesar's conquest.[45]

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[35] Suetonius, *De uita caesarum*, ed. and trans, J. C. Rolfe, *Lives of the Caesars*, 2 vols. (Cambridge MA, 1914), vol. 1, 66-7; 94-5; 110-11.
[36] Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 280. Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', 893-4.
[37] Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 280. Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', 893-4.
[38] Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 280-81; n. 123; 124; 126; 127; 130.
[39] Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 280-81; n. 123; n. 124; n. 126; n. 127; n. 130.
[40] Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniae*, 17; 90 [priscos illos communesque cum omnibus gentibus errores]
[41] Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniae*, 18; 91.
[42] Asser, *Res gestae Ælfredi*, trans. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great* (Harmondsworth, 1983).
[43] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 20-23.
[44] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 22-23.
[45] Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, ed. and trans. J. A. Giles, *Old English Chronicles* (London, 1906), 3.

No other early source is as eccentric as Nennius' *Historia Brittonum*.[46] Although the *Historia Brittonum*'s substructure is unmistakably Orosian, Nennius seems to have been under the misapprehension that Caesar had invaded Britain *after* winning supremacy over his rivals as sole leader of Rome.[47] Nennius also claimed that Caesar had first landed somewhere in the Thames estuary and proceeded to fight, either against a 'Dolobellus', or at a 'Dolobellum'.[48] Corruption in the surviving MS leaves the sense ambiguous, but either a battle was fought near Dolobellum (perhaps Deal in Kent) against an unnamed proconsul of the British king Belinus, or else against a Dolobellus, who was himself the proconsul.[49] Cassivellaunus is never mentioned. The *Historia Brittonum* goes on to relate that Caesar's first invasion was defeated on land and that most of his ships were lost, while his second expedition took place not one but three years later, and apparently involved fewer than half the number of ships (300) than Caesar claimed in his own account (over 800).[50] Apparently, Nennius sought to diminish the impression of Caesar's relative power and emphasise how difficult it had been for Rome to subdue Britain. This is exemplified as he describes that Caesar had retreated immediately when his forces failed to navigate the defensive pikes laid in the Thames.[51] That would arguably have been a poignant detail for any who recalled Bede's remarks about the survival of those estuarine defences. It attested that through guile, even the mightiest of invaders could be beaten back. Yet, Nennius' starkest divergence from what survives of the received narrative becomes apparent as he ascribes Caesar's eventual victory to an apocryphal third invasion, during which Caesar supposedly won a victory near Trinovantum (London) and forced the Britons to pay a tribute.[52] The *Historia Brittonum* adds that the Britons continued to pay this tribute during the reign of Augustus, but is adamant that Britain was not finally *conquered* until Claudius's invasion.[53] Nennius seems to have been invested in the notion that Caesar took on Britain when the Roman was at the apogee of his power - when he had already fought and won the Great Roman Civil War. He calls him 'the first who had acquired absolute power at Rome', which had 'obtained the dominion of the world'.[54] These assertions, when read in the context of Caesar's struggles, emphasise the might of the independent ancient Britain. They suggest that only the strongest secular figure of the ancient world, with a unified Rome behind him and while at the very height of his powers, had been strong enough to confront Britain. While Rome had won a token tribute, it had also been bloodied and humbled, mired in three costly campaigns, and had seen its ambitions checked.

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[46] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*.
[47] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 22. Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', 896.
[48] Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', 896-7.
[49] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 22-3; 63. See discussion in: Nearing, 'The legend of Julius Caesar's British conquests', 896-7.
[50] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 22-3. Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 244-5.
[51] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 23.
[52] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 23.
[53] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 23.
[54] Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 22; 63 [accepisset singulare imperium primus et obtinuisset] [acciperent dominium totius mundi].

The above constituted the predominant Latin sources for Caesar's invasions of Britain. Most post-conquest historians who mentioned the historical Caesar referred back to and propagated these traditions in whole or part. But there were plenty of other reminders of the historical Julius Caesar's legacy. As Bede's comments about the defensive spikes in the Thames attest, Caesar's invasions had left a lasting mark on both the landscape and the lived environment. Many towns attributed their founding to Caesar, myths that clearly helped to define local identities.[55] William of Malmesbury's *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* mentions, without any apparent textual basis, that Caesar had been the first to use the hot springs at Bath.[56] It is perhaps unusual for William to have believed this, as he was one of the few at the time who had direct access to *De bello gallico* itself.[57] In this instance, he paid Caesar's words no more heed than those things that, we must suppose, he had heard or read in local sources. Given his reading, William's remarks on the historical Caesar are surprising. He titled Caesar an emperor, and implied that it was Caesar who had conquered Britain and not Claudius, who he did not mention.[58] This is all the more remarkable given that William not only had access to *De bello gallico*, but engaged with it substantively. In the *Gesta regum* he repeated Caesar's remark about the ancient Britons wearing moustaches, and synthesised two distinct passages from Caesar's work to show that William the Conqueror's use of native allies to tackle guerrilla tactics had a precedent in Caesar's own strategy.[59] He also mentioned Caesar's use of British allies in the *Historia nouella*.[60] William, for his part, did not place Caesar's own accounts on a pedestal, and freely augmented them with that which he had heard or read in local sources.

Even institutional histories occasionally referred back to Caesar's invasions. The little-known *De abbatibus Abbendoniae*, not to be confused with the *Historia ecclesia Abbendonensis*, summarily narrated Caesar's invasions before treating the foundation and abbatial history of Abingdon Abbey.[61] Across the Channel in Normandy, Orderic Vitalis attributed the foundation of Rouen and Carlisle to Caesar in his *Historia ecclesiastica*.[62] He said that memory of Rouen's foundation had been preserved in 'ancient histories of the Romans', although his claims about Carlisle's foundation have no surviving written precedent.[63] Such stories helped to account for and colour the lived landscape of Britain through the Middle Ages and beyond. Their variety and endurance emerges in Homer Nearing Jr's brief but illuminating studies of the trace they left in Early Modern record.[64] These legends, as they still persisted, were enshrined in the literary works of William Shakespeare, and

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[55] See discussion below.
[56] *GP*, 306-7.
[57] Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, 57.
[58] *GP*, 444-5; *GR*, 16-17.
[59] GR, 239.2, pp. 450-51; 254.1, pp. 470-71.
[60] *HN*, 60-61.
[61] *De Abbatibus Abbendoniae*, London, British Library, MS. Vitellius, A. XIII, fos. 83r-87v, 83r-84r. See: *Historia ecclesie Abbendonensis*, ed. and trans. J. Hudson, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2002 [ii]; 2007 [i]), vol. 1, lvi; liii n. 244.
[62] *HE*, vol. 3, 34-7; vol. 6, 280-83; 518-9.
[63] OV, vol. 3, xxv; vol. 6, 280-83 [priscis Quiritum historiis]; 281, n. 3; 518-9; 519, n. 11.
[64] See: H. Nearing, 'Local Caesar traditions in Britain', *Speculum* 24 (1949), 218-27. H. Nearing, 'Julius Caesar and the Tower of London', *Modern Language Notes* 63 (1948), 228-33. H. Nearing, 'Caesar's sword', *Modern Language Notes* 63 (1948), 403-5.

attracted the interest of the great antiquarians William Camden and John Leland.[65] Often, the stories were at once entertaining and bombastic. There is, for instance, the tale of the origins of Chichester's River Lavant as recorded by Nicholas Trivet in the fourteenth century.[66] The river, it is said, had been conjured by a magic snake that was sent to Caesar by none other than Virgil himself. As we move to analyse two major narrative sources in detail, it is important bear the above in mind. In-period, memory of the historical Caesar and his exploits was not dominated by a few unimpeachable and canonical sources. It was, rather, a living, fluid, and sometimes contested memory that was integral to local and national identities. It was a conglomerate of a whole range of eminent and lesser sources. Caesar's historical legacy and memory of it mattered to people.

I would argue that in light of this it is little wonder that narrating Caesar's invasions appealed to two of the twelfth century's most ambitious historical writers, Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth. Following Bede, Henry began his *Historia Anglorum* with a geography of Britain and ethnographic survey of the early migrations, although the historical narrative proper begins at Caesar's invasions.[67] Henry gave Caesar by far the lengthiest and most attentive treatment of any Roman leader - three and a half Latin pages in the modern OMT edition. For comparison: Claudius's career occupies three-quarters of a page, while Trajan, Diocletian, and Constantine's reigns are handled in a page each.[68] While the reigns of these other Romans are accounted by means of relatively dry biographical surveys, Henry's retelling of Caesar's invasions is dynamic and artful - a synthesis of his own imagination and systematic borrowing from the incongruent Bedan and Nennian traditions.[69] Henry recognised that these two traditions disagreed, and told his readers that he would only delve into the Nennian tradition for details not found in Bede.[70] He stated that Bede's authority was 'without doubt', and declared that '[only] what is not to be found in Bede I have learned from other authors'.[71] Henry tells us in his work's prologue that he had been advised to follow Bede where possible, and additionally there are indications that he grew to doubt the provenance of the *Historia Brittonum*.[72] He had initially ascribed the text to Gildas, but in the later recensions of his history he attributed it to 'a certain historian'.[73] The proportional reliance on the two traditions bears out the professed strategy. Approximately 30% of the account was taken verbatim or near-verbatim from Bede, while Henry's amplifications and interpolations were draped atop a soundly Bedan superstructure.[74] In later recensions, *laudes* drawn from Paul the Deacon's *Historia Romana* were appended after the narrative proper.[75] Henry only drew on the *Historia Brittonum* to supply information concerning the British leaders' relations to one another, and

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[65] Nearing, 'Local Caesar traditions in Britain', 218-27.
[66] Nearing, 'Local Caesar traditions in Britain', 224.
[67] *HA*, 10-31.
[68] *HA*, 30-37; 40-41; 44-7; 56-9; 60-63.
[69] *HA*, lxxvi-lxxxviii; xc-xci.
[70] *HA*, 24-5.
[71] *HA*, 622-3 [certo]; 24-5 [Quod in Beda non inuentum in aliis auctoribus repperi].
[72] *HA*, 6-7; xc-xci.
[73] *HA*, xc-xci.
[74] *HA*, 36, n. 68.
[75] *HA*, 36-7; 36 n. 68; 36 n. 69.

borrowed its note that Caesar ordered the fifth month of the year to be named in his honour upon his return to Rome.[76] When Henry eventually came across Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*, he followed Geoffrey's corrections to the names and relations of the British leaders, but did not amend anything founded on Bede.[77]

Although Henry demonstrated a perceptible appetite for authority, if not quite 'truth' in the rigid, modern sense, he amplified freely and occasionally simplified Bede's staccato Latin, adding conjunctions and connectives.[78] He was especially partial to adjectival dramatization.[79] The most substantive originalities lend the narrative, particularly battle descriptions, a vividness that is unmistakably Lucanian in character.[80] This all betrays an apparent conviction that Bede had not quite done justice to Caesar's stature or the magnitude of his achievement. For instance, where Bede had written that Caesar had waged war (*bellum gereret*) against the Gauls and Germans before coming to Britain, Henry preferred to say that Caesar had conquered (*superasset*) them.[81] Likewise, Henry attached superlative *laudes* that eulogized Caesar's records in battle: 11,192,000 enemy slain, 50 battles fought, and the readily paraphrased verdict that "Caesar overshadowed all generals, indeed all worldly men, of all time".[82] Similarly, he quoted Paul the Deacon to suggest that "so great was his goodness that those he had subdued by arms he conquered more completely by his clemency".[83] Henry's most remarkable originality though was a moving battle speech he placed in Caesar's mouth, that runs to almost a page long.[84] The speech appeals strongly to the moral register as it questions what course might exhibit perfected courage:

> Most courageous comrades, whose courage could not be broken either by adversity at sea or by hardships on land ... do not think that my words of exhortation can add anything to your honour. For it is the summit of perfection, proved so often in so many dangers that it cannot increase, nor is it capable of decrease. That courage, I say, which has always shone brightest in the most adverse circumstances, marching forward in determined hope where others might have despaired, and going into combat with serene cheerfulness ... Assuredly, of the two alternatives – to gain victory today, which is blessed, or to die for the fatherland, which is more free from care – I have myself inevitably chosen the latter. Flight is only for the worthless. [85]

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[76] *HA*, 32-3; 32 n. 60; 36 n. 67.
[77] *HA*, 32-3 n. 60.
[78] *HA*, 30-37.
[79] *HA*, 30-37.
[80] See, for instance: *HA*, 32-3; 32 n. 58; 34-5; 34 n. 64.
[81] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 20-21. *HA*, 30-31.
[82] *HA*, 36-7 [omnibus ducibus – immo, omnis temporibus hominibus – Caesar prenituit]; 37, n. 70.
[83] *HA*, 36-7 [tante fuit bonitatis, ut quos armis subegerat clementia magis uicerit]; 37, n. 70.
[84] *HA*, 34-5.
[85] *HA*, 32-5 [Consortes fortissimi quorum uirtuti nec asperitas maris nec labor terram refragari potuit ... non me exhortari uos arbitremini, ut uestram uerbis augeam probitatem. Que enim summa et perfectissima est, et tot in periculis tociensprobata, crescere nequit, decrescere nescit ... ego certe e duobus alterum ineuitabiliter elegi, aut hodie uincere quod beatum est, aut mori pro patria quod securius est. Sola fuga miserorum est]. Please note that in the latter part of this passage, 'alterum' may be taken to mean either 'the second/latter (of two)' or 'one of (two)'. In any case, Henry's implication remains the same - that as an individual Caesar's only choice had been whether to fight and die or run. Victory was only an option if his men stayed and fought with him. While he entreated them to enable that outcome, he had not strictly-speaking 'chosen' it. See, for instance, Thomas Forester's 1853 translation, which I have italicised to emphasise its corroboration of the above point: 'For myself, of two issues I have irrevocably chosen, either to conquer, which is glorious, or to

Caesar's 'choice' perhaps takes aim at the Stoic sage Cato, whose resolve to die for the republic rather than live and serve under Caesar was celebrated by Lucan as the embodiment of courage.[86] However, Augustine had explicitly denounced Cato's suicide, and had defined courage as willingness to persist along rational courses despite hardship.[87] In this light, Henry's Caesar is offering his troops a choice to either unify under him and find, in blessed (perfected) courage, a blessed (*beatum*) victory over the enemy, or else, as individuals, succumb in the face of hardship to death or flight, neither of which can truly constitute courage. That Caesar admits he will be slain if his men do not follow him is a recognition that *he* cannot perfect *his* courage unless he is able to unify his community, in this case his legions. Striking is the use of the term 'enemy', which exegetes traditionally interpreted as a figurative allusion to the Devil and his efforts to derail moral advancement and the pursuit of unity.[88] After his speech, Henry tells us that Caesar 'raised his right hand', after which 'the whole army, sending up a shout to the heavens, and with their right hands raised, threatened the enemy furiously'.[89] Arguably, Henry wanted to portray Caesar as a civilized invader and a unifier who sought to banish the discord he faced. Because of the obvious analogy with William the Conqueror's own invasion of Britain, it is tempting to perceive this an endorsement of the Normans' means towards unification.

While Henry was careful to show virtue's mutual interdependence with unity, this raises the issue of who exactly he was suggesting had been unified. Educated readers would have recognized that Henry's speech was based on a series of speeches given by Caesar and his lieutenants in the *Pharsalia*, although in Lucan's speeches, Caesar had not asked the legions to unify against another nation, but against his and their own.[90] Caesar had famously spoken before a civil war, not a war of conquest. It is noteworthy, then, that Henry also followed what he had read in the *Historia Brittonum* in mentioning that the Romans and the Britons shared a common ancestral heritage as the descendants of Troy.[91] Arguably, Henry did not think of Caesar's conquest of Britain as a war of conquest, but as part of the opening gambit in the Great Roman Civil War. This was to suggest that Caesar's *civil war*, the war to unify the world and ready it for Christ and hence the emergence of Christianity, did not begin with his crossing of the Rubicon, but with the conquests of Gaul, Germany, and Britain. The people of these regions were already unified to a degree on account of their common ancestry, and Caesar had unified them on the higher, moral-political plane to prepare them for the advent of Christ. Henry's insinuation situated Britain at the vanguard of God's plans for the temporal disposition of the world, for she was one of the first to be brought under the aegis

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die for our country, *which is in the power of every man'*. See: Forester, T., *The chronicle of Henry of Huntingdon. Comprising the history of England, from the invasion of Julius Cæsar to the accession of Henry II. Also, The acts of Stephen, king of England and duke of Normandy* (London, 1853), 14.

[86] Colish, *The Stoic Tradition*, 270-75. For the dominant Christian response to Stoicism's regarding duty to *patria* as the highest of all ends, see: *DCD*, 32-36; 38-9. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 36-40; 42-4.

[87] See: *DCD*, 32-36; 38-9. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 36-40; 42-4.

[88] E. Klein, *Augustine's Theology of Angels* (Cambridge, 2018), especially 149-154.

[89] *HA*, 34-5 [erexit dextram] [tollens ad sidera clamorem exercitus dextris erectis infrenduit].

[90] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 23-31.

[91] HoH, 24-7.

of that polity which would come to guarantee the dissemination of the Word. Therefore, on the one hand the speech given by Henry's Caesar is a celebration of moral-political unification and the strength that comes of it. Yet, on the other, it is an allusion to the spectre that so often haunts progress in the contingent world – the danger that a community might be tricked into employing heinous means in the pursuit of even the noblest of ends. In the *Pharsalia*, the chief centurion Laelius had responded to Caesar's speech by declaring his signal assent to Caesar's any command: 'if you bid me bury my sword in my brother's breast or my father's throat or the body of my teeming wife, I will perform it all, even if my hand be reluctant'.[92] The apparent moral is that one must endure and cultivate courage in service of unity but courage, even in service of unity, could be led to sin if not governed by the prudence of a free and godly mind.

Around four to five years after Henry had completed the first seven books of the *Historia Anglorum*, Geoffrey of Monmouth published the *Historia regum Britanniae*.[93] There is some evidence that Geoffrey had read Henry's work. For instance, it appears he copied a life of St Helena only otherwise found in the *Historia Anglorum*.[94] He also mentioned Henry by name and knew that he had already narrated the distant past.[95] In what follows I would like to contend that Geoffrey's Caesar narrative was written as a direct response to what he read in the *Historia Anglorum*, or at least the discourse that the *Historia Anglorum* had prompted and conditioned. Certainly, Geoffrey sank a great deal of effort into the composition of his own Caesar narrative. Running to three and a half Latin pages in the modern edition, it stands apart from the text that brackets it on account of its vivid detail.[96] Like Henry's composition, it comments overtly on unity and the means by which unity ought to be achieved. In Geoffrey's narrative, Caesar sends a missive to the Britons and declares without shame that, 'we shall easily force them [the Britons] to ... obey Roman authority forever'.[97] Therein, Caesar also asserts that shared Trojan lineage binds the islanders in submission to the best of Troy's descendants, the Romans.[98] These details seem to be Geoffrey's acknowledgement of Henry's argument, and I would argue that Cassibellaunus's retort to Caesar delivers Geoffrey's own riposte to Henry: it states that common ancestry ought to bind peoples in unity through *friendship* and not, as he calls it, servitude. Cassibellaunus is resolute that the Britons will (read, perhaps, *should*) fight to defend their liberty.[99] The structure of Geoffrey's account shows that he disagreed with Henry's assessment concerning the relative primacy of the antecedent traditions. He eschewed a Bedan structure in favour of the Nennian tradition, which was more sympathetic to the insular cause.[100] Atop this was layered original detail rich with apparent

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[92] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 30-31 [pectore si fratris gladium iuguloque parentis | condere me iubeas plenaeque in uiscera partu | coniugis, inuita peragam tamen omnia dextra].
[93] *HA*, lxviii. Gransden*, Historical Writing*, 201.
[94] *HA*, civ; civ-cv n. 166. For an alternative view of the derivation of this material, see: A. Harbus, *Helena of Britain in Medieval Legend* (Cambridge, 2002), especially 75-6.
[95] *HRB*, 280-81.
[96] *HRB*, 68-81
[97] *HRB*, 68-9 [leuiter cogendi erunt ... continuum obsequium Romanae dignitati praestate.
[98] *HRB*, 68-9.
[99] *HRB*, 68-9.
[100] For instance, see: *HRB*, 68-9. Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 22-3.

insinuation. During the first invasion, Casibellaunus and his magnates resolve to attack the Romans quickly and in full force before the invaders can capture any settlement to which they might be able to retreat.[101] The borrowing of the *Pharsalia*'s proemial '*pila pilis*' appears to signal that Geoffrey, too, categorized Caesar's invasions of Britain as a civil war.[102] His Caesar had feared as much – he told Cassibellaunus to comply, 'lest we offend the ancient dignity of our ancestor Priam by shedding the blood of our cousins'.[103] During the battle proper, Cassibellaunus's brother, the aptly named Nennius, seizes the opportunity to attack Caesar himself, but awestruck by the famous general he cannot land his strike.[104] Caesar's return blows might have killed Nennius had he not met them with his shield just in time. The onrush of troops separates the duellists, but Caesar must relinquish his sword as it is lodged fast in Nennius's shield. Discarding his own weapon, Nennius extricates Caesar's blade and fights on with it, finding that his enemies fall easily to his attacks. Even the Roman tribune Labienus dies to the first strike. All of this seems to insinuate that victory is sometimes earned as much through advantage as through personal merit. The Britons win the battle and the Romans are forced to retreat, embark their ships, and put back to sea. Geoffrey attributes the British victory to the providence of God.

Although the British cheer this success, Nennius dies from the wound inflicted by Caesar's first strike, and is buried with the 'emperor's' sword.[105] Geoffrey adds that this weapon was, 'called "Yellow Death", because nobody wounded by it ever escaped with his life'.[106] This reinforces an important allegorical theme that permeates the whole episode – that Caesar's touch, or even just his gaze, inexorably robbed any they fell upon of their liberty. Indeed, as soon as Caesar arrives back in Gaul from Britain, a rebellion compels him to promise to restore Gauls's '*liberty* ... property ... and *freedom*'.[107] The second invasion of Britain comes neither one, nor three, but two years later, and follows the *Historia Brittonum* in suggesting that Caesar's force sailed up the Thames to attempt a landing near Trinovantum.[108] Also borrowed from the *Historia Brittonum* are the details that the spikes laid in the Thames had foiled Caesar's tactics, and that thousands of his men had drowned in the river.[109] Those who survive and make it to the banks are set upon by British forces, and many are slain before Caesar is able to retreat back to his ships and return to the continent.

As the British again celebrate their success with sacrifices and games, a dispute breaks out between Hirelglas, a nephew of Cassibellaunus, and Cuelinus, the nephew of duke Androgeus.[110] Hirelglas is killed in the ensuing fracas, and the king and duke each assert their right to try the case

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[101] *HRB*, 70-71.
[102] *HRB*, 70-71. Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 2-3.
[103] *HRB*, 68-9 [ne nos ipsorum cognatorum nostrorum sanguinem fundentes antiquam nobilitatem patris nostri Priami offendamus].
[104] *HRB*, 70-71.
[105] *HRB*, 70-73 [imperator].
[106] *HRB*, 72-3.
[107] *HRB*, 72-3.
[108] *HRB*, 72-3.
[109] *HRB*, 72-3. Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 22-3.
[110] *HRB*, 74-5.

themselves.[111] As neither is prepared to compromise, the king prepares for war against Androgeus' lands and the stronghold of Trinovantum.[112] Androgeus resolves to depose Cassibellaunus and seize the throne that had previously been denied to him on account of his youth.[113] To defeat Cassibellaunus, he pledges himself to a compact with Caesar, promising that if Rome helps set him on the throne then in return he will vouchsafe Britain's allegiance.[114] The Trinovantes' collusion with Caesar also features in the *De bello Gallico*, where they are led by 'Mandubrachius', while for their part Orosius and Bede propagated the nominal corruption 'Androgius'.[115] Nennius, however, had never mentioned Caesar's British allies. After an exchange of hostages, amongst them Androgeus's son Scaeva, the superhuman Caesarean legionary of Lucanian fame who was mentioned above, Caesar invades a third time and is soon found by Cassibellaunus's forces.[116] As a battle ensues, Androgeus's forces spring out from the undergrowth, surprising the king and his army, who take refuge on a nearby hill.[117] As Caesar prepares to starve the resistive forces into submission, Cassibellaunus writes to Androgeus calling for peace and asking for reconciliation.[118] Surprisingly, Androgeus relents to his king's supplication, and bids Caesar to be satisfied with having won the submission and tribute which he had set out for.[119] Terms agreed, the leaders reconcile, Cassibellaunus remains king of Britain, and Androgeus accompanies Caesar to wage war against Rome.[120]

Geoffrey's Caesar is hardly the divinely favoured, civilizing conqueror that an audience already familiar with Henry's account might have been expecting. Rather, he is a tyrannical contrast to the Britons for whom liberty and unity, at least until his arrival, were not mutually exclusive. Geoffrey seems to have been responding in kind to the Norman apologist's proposition that Rome had done God's work in preparing Britain to enjoy the unity of Christian life. It is surprising that both authors held that Caesar's invasions of Britain constituted civil war, and surprising that scholars have overlooked this insinuation, but we ought to recall that Lucan had popularised the notion that civil war was the crucible in which paradigmatic political changes were cast.[121] In Lucan's view, the Great Roman Civil War had ushered in the most profound political change known to history. The question was whether such dramatic change was desirable at any given time, and from any given perspective. Henry advocated for political unification and celebrated an agent's divinely ordained correction of disorder and decadence, which he saw as a part of the human teleological journey. Geoffrey, by contrast, asserted that there was no unity without the authentic assent of a community to be led – liberty - and that leaders ought to respect bonds of kin and the

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[111] *HRB*, 74-5.
[112] *HRB*, 74-5
[113] *HRB*, 76-7.
[114] *HRB*, 76-7.
[115] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 258-9; Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 280-81.
[116] *HRB*, 76-9.
[117] *HRB*, 78-9.
[118] *HRB*, 78-9.
[119] *HRB*, 80-81.
[120] *HRB*, 80-81.
[121] As we noted in the general introduction.

associated duties of friendship and co-operation. Scholarship is divided on the matter of Geoffrey's allegiances.[122] The evidence of Geoffrey's handling of Caesar's invasions is in itself insufficient to disqualify the notion that he wrote to legitimate the Norman dynasty but, against the backdrop of the Normans' perennial conflict with the Welsh, it at least tempered his work's Virgilian secular triumphalism with a pragmatic reminder that unethical human choices will forestall even the most famously prophesied destiny.[123] Furthermore, this war of ideas must have attuned English audiences to the significance of what the historical Caesar had accomplished, prompted them to contemplate the righteousness of the Norman Conquest, and perhaps wonder what the next Caesarean moment might bring to pass in their own time. For better or for worse, Julius Caesar had been transformative in a way that clearly resonated with the lived experience, aspirations, and fears of post-conquest England.

[122] For a survey of the views represented in this historiographical debate, see: M. A. Faletra, 'Narrating the matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman colonization of Wales', *The Chaucer Review* 35 (2000), 60-85, especially 60-62.

[123] For Geoffrey's history as a work of Virgilian secular triumphalism that cast the descendants of Troy as Britain's divinely chosen leaders, see: F. Ingledew, 'The Book of Troy and the genealogical construction of history: the case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*', *Speculum* 69 (1994), 665-704. For evidence of Geoffrey's close attention to the ethical secondary causes of events in the world, see: M. Fries, 'Boethian themes and tragic structure in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*', in M. F. Braswell and J. Bugge (eds.), *The Arthurian Tradition* (Tuscaloosa AL, 1988), 29-42.

Clearly, Henry and Geoffrey found value in narrating Caesar's British campaigns. Where Henry amplified the Bedan tradition to bolster his *longue durée* analysis of God's temporal designs and celebrate those who had played a role in the coalescence and unification of communities, it appears that Geoffrey undercut the dominant narrative and critiqued the Norman legacy and Anglo-Norman identity. It remains to justify the suggestion that Henry and Geoffrey's arguments would have been intended and understood as commentary on the consequences of the Norman Conquest. The best evidence is contextual. For the contemporary audience, the conquest remained in the twilight of living memory, and its legacy influenced almost every facet of their lived experience. Britain's geography meant that all of the channel invasions were of a distinct and demonstrably recognised type.[124] Tacit analogy across a type was a fundamental and very familiar literary device. There is also the prevalence in these texts of a more explicit form of Caesarean analogy - the characterisation of contemporary kings as 'New Caesars'. What follows examines the extent and intent of these comparisons with Caesar, with specific reference to William the Conqueror. I hope to show that commentators had indissolubly linked William and Caesar, and so any subsequent reassessment of Caesar's achievement inevitably spoke to William's own legacy. Additionally, here and through the remainder of this study, I intend to argue that the true significance of the New Caesar type has been overlooked. I contend that it served both an epideictic and a deliberative function. That is, that it was used to convey praise and blame, but also a specific edificatory message – a message that scholarship has not previously acknowledged. During the post-conquest period, and especially during the twelfth century, Caesar was remembered as a figure of import and controversy, whose example presented much to emulate, avoid, and contemplate. Henry's Julius Caesar narrative praised the Norman Conquest, and Geoffrey's censured it, but the praise and blame of past events was not necessarily primary. A higher aspiration was to influence the course of future conduct and events, as the following chapters demonstrate.

Obvious problems confronted any historian who might have hoped to influence the handling of future instances for the better. For a start, as we have noted, fortune and contingency seemed to make effecting desired changes difficult or impossible. While Caesar and William's conquests had succeeded in delivering widespread change, events as consequential as Caesar's invasions or the Norman Conquest happened only very infrequently. Invasion and conquest were indeed crises, and crisis was indeed a crucible in which much could be recast, but the problem was that too much of the paradigm had persisted through all of these moments. In particular, no invasion had liberated the nation from the tyranny of fortune. This is perhaps where scholarship

[124] Exemplified by Henry of Huntingdon's grouping of them into the five metaphorical 'plagues', See: *HA*, lix; 14-15.

has erred in its assessments – in ascribing too much prominence to moments of crisis, it has overlooked the contemporary estimation that the zenith of human agency was not necessarily coterminous with invasions or other crises.[125] Of course, most at the time still believed that there was merit in striving to do their best in the face of whatever contingencies confronted them. They recognised that despite the harshness of the lapsarian condition, humanity bore responsibility to remain in a state of grace, and to try to instigate the conditions under which they and others would be less vulnerable to worldly misery, transgression, and damnation. Yet, dissatisfaction with the human lot in this life is writ large in the historians' works. It should not be surprising then that some theorised on the matter of how fortune's caprice might be extinguished in perpetuity. My argument is that to this end, the historians focussed on the circumstances and behaviour of those kings and selected powerful magnates who they sometimes characterised as New Caesars. As I shall show below, these were figures who possessed any of a wide range of Caesarean characteristics. Arguably though, their defining trait was possession of the power to effect change. Historians showed in their narratives that recent New Caesars (henceforth I shall use this term interchangeably with 'Caesars') had failed to fulfil their immense potential – cultivation of an order that was conducive to the attainment of virtue and salvation. In this manner, they compiled the mistakes of past Caesars, and tacitly guided the audience to an understanding of how the next Caesar ought to (be advised to) lead. A later chapter will elaborate on the very significant distinction in implied capability that was understood to exist between Caesars and non-Caesars, but first it is necessary to examine the New Caesar type by means of a case study.

It is difficult to overstate the effect that the Norman Conquest had on English and Norman culture. No figure had been as pivotal in bringing those events about as William the Conqueror himself. His achievement engendered an explosion of literary production, and many of the histories and panegyrics that were penned compared and contrasted William with Caesar. What follows is a review of the Latin material written during William's lifetime that made recourse to that interrogative figure. There is an intrinsic value in this analysis, but in stepping back a generation from the twelfth-century historians at the heart of this study it is possible to contextualise the subsequent development of the New Caesar type. It is also an opportunity to place the model in proper context by contrasting it with the more straightforward causal paradigm that had prevailed a generation earlier. In my analysis I shall attempt to delve beneath the literal register of the texts and discern the arguments of their integumental registers – the allegorical, the moral, and the spiritual.

Of the Norman kings' achievements, William the Conqueror's were the most naturally conducive to comparison with Caesar. Some scholars have been too hasty to assume that the comparison was inherently flattering, but more measured assessments have shown that it called for careful handling.[126] The delicacy and nuance of the New Caesar type is evident in the *Gesta Guillelmi*, a biographical panegyric written c.1071-7 by the knight-turned-archdeacon of Lisieux,

[125] Winkler, *Royal Responsibility*, especially 4.
[126] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', especially 464-7.

William of Poitiers.[127] The *Gesta Guillelmi* is one of the foremost narrative sources for the conquest, and as such it has long been of great interest to scholars. The best breakdown of its author's use of classical figures has emerged in a recent study by Emily Winkler.[128] Winkler argued that there was much more nuance in Poitiers' depiction of William as a 'second and greater Caesar' than had previously been noted.[129] She contended that it is a guarded characterisation, whose form suggests that its author perceived a need to handle the analogy with some care.[130] People knew that it had taken Caesar two or three attempts to subdue Britain, and it was not unanimously accepted that this constituted a conquest.[131] Similarly, and although Rome did eventually conquer Britain, circumstances on the continent had ultimately forced the Romans to abandon the island.[132] Unqualified analogy, then, risked offending the king and questioning the permanence of his legacy.[133] Any educated audience was also likely familiar with tales of Caesar's vice – his arrogant pride, for example, which was considered to have impaired his judgement and planning.[134] Poitiers' strategy was to be clear that William was not another Caesar, but a '*New Caesar*'. He was neither Caesar reborn nor the inheritor of a manifestly imperfect Roman legacy. Before Winkler's article, most of the period's Caesar analogies had been aggregated as manifestations of the 'outdoing topos', a conventional and simplistic trope of praise.[135] Yet, her analysis has drawn out the analogies' subtle gradations of meaning, and has convincingly shown that these were the product of considerable planning and artifice on the author's part. The overall impact of Winkler's study has been to reinforce the importance of taking the author's words and narrative strategies on their own merits. This means looking through the convenient but reductive *topoi* categorizations outlined by Ernst Curtius.[136] Winkler's work is important, but it did overlook what was, arguably, the most significant contrast observed between the two great leaders:

> If you look closely at the deeds of this Roman and those of our leader, you will rightly say that the Roman was improvident and trusted too much to fortune (*fortunae*), whereas William always acted with foresight (*prouidum hominem*) and succeeded (*res bene gesserit*) more by good planning (*optimo consilio*) than by chance (*casu*).[137]

This summary is redolent of Vegetius' assessment, amongst the first of his general rules of war, that it is preferable to lead through prudent planning and action than through reliance on fortune.[138] It

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[127] *GG*, xx.
[128] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', especially 464-7.
[129] See: Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 464-5; 464-5 n. 60-63.
[130] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 465-7.
[131] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 465-7.
[132] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 466.
[133] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 466.
[134] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 465-6. See the seminal description of Caesar's prideful character: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 10-13.
[135] See: Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 464-5; 464-5 n. 60-63. Curtius, *European Literature*, 162-5.
[136] Curtius, *European Literature*, 162-5.
[137] *GG*, 172-3 [Si Romani illius, et nostri principis acta attentius perspexeris, illum temerarium atque fortunae nimis confidentem, hunc omnino prouidum hominem, qui magis optimo consilio quam casu res bene gesserit, recte dices].
[138] Vegetius, *Empitoma rei militaris*, trans. N. P. Miller, *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science*, 2nd rev. edn. (Liverpool, 2013), 116.

might also refer to William's political legacy, given that the present and future ought to have been of greater concern to any contemporary audience than the Normans' already manifest past victories. For a panegyrist, how much more flattering to allude to the permanence of a subject's achievement than to their past glories? Its insinuation seems to be that a battle could be won by a stroke of fortune or by good planning, but that the instillation of a conducive and lasting peace could only be brought about through proper preparation. What is conveyed here and elsewhere in the *Gesta Guillelmi* is the suggestion that William, just like Caesar, was capable of achieving whatever he commanded. Poitiers twice mentions that even the English would have done William's bidding 'if it had pleased him to command it'.[139] This was to suggest that William's proximate ends were as impervious to contingency as Caesar's had been. The distinction between them was that William, unlike the great Roman, had clearly deserved providence's favourable disposition because in his foresight he had taken measures to leave a lasting legacy of unity and peace. William is also portrayed as a unifier: '[following his success,] the regions which had formerly been subject to many kings might [now] be ruled by one'.[140] England had already been unified under one king before 1066, but William's 'regions' were more than just England. Aside from its literal political meaning, on the spiritual level it intimated that those regions would be brought more closely under the rule of the king of kings, God. All of this would have resonated with an audience's aspiration to unity. It would have coloured William the enabler of the English people's cultivation of truly good lives and, by extension, their pursuit of salvation.[141]

Caesar's invasions and the Norman Conquest prompted writers to reflect on how communities might best be unified in service of appropriately-ordered good ends referred to God. Although the *Gesta Guillelmi* was the only major contemporary prose work that explored the 'New Caesar' concept, the idea coloured much contemporary verse. Later, we will review several small poems of the period that implicitly and sometimes explicitly associated William and Caesar, but first we turn to the most significant verse work of the time. This was the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* (*Carmen*), that is usually attributed to Guy, Bishop of Amiens. It is probable that the *Carmen*, written within two years of the Conquest, was a source for portions of the later *Gesta Guillelmi*.[142] The *Carmen*'s narrative proemium established that the unificatory impulse of William's endeavour was the work's central theme.[143] While decidedly less hyperbolic in his praise than Poitiers, Guy is equally resolute about the totality of William's unifying achievement. The tone is set in the first lines of narrative that follow the *divisio*: 'For, another Julius [Caesar], by restoring his triumph you compel an unbridled people to love the yoke'.[144] The phrase 'unbridled people' conjures the classical image of an ungodly nation pursuing diverse ends for their own sake rather than in

[139] *GG*, 170-75.
[140] *GG*, 172-3.
[141] *GG*, 172-3.
[142] *Carmen*, xvi.
[143] *Carmen*, 4-5.
[144] *Carmen*, 4-5, [Iulius alter, enim, cuius renouando triumphum | Effrenem gentem cogis amare iugum].

reference to any shared communal goal.[145] By contrast, William had turned the yoke of service into a inducement of love – a love of God and of one-another, cultivated through the unification of individuals who acted in service of common temporal and ultimate purposes. The tacit 'outdoing' aspect here is that the unity that came of Caesar's conquest could only have benefitted the Britons in their temporal life, whilst William's kingdom proved of benefit to his people in this life and facilitated their salvation in the next.

Poitiers had been guarded in his insinuations, but by contrast Guy openly celebrated the Norman kingdom as a restoration of the power and prestige of Rome, and did not qualify the recurrent comparison. This might seem careless when contrasted against Poitiers' delicate rhetoric. Arguably, though, Guy *did* nuance his analogy, but in a different fashion. He did not resort to overt comparison in order to support character assessments, but made use of implicit analogy to help express the significance of the political and spiritual order that he believed the Norman Conquest had instituted. The primary means of this argument was allegory, appeal to which seems to be apparent in the passage concerning William's preparations for crossing of the English Channel. To a contemporary audience, this would have resonated to some degree with Lucan's account of Caesar's failed sea crossing in *Pharsalia* V.[146] There, Caesar had been impetuous to cross the Adriatic and return to Italy while a storm threatened. By contrast, Guy emphasised that William had waited humbly for favourable conditions before setting sail.[147] This illustrated that the duke was humble before nature and God, 'He who created, marks out and directs the seasons'.[148] William's patience did not tend to idleness: he prayed at the church of Saint-Valery for a fortnight, and the break in the weather that followed is interpreted as a signal of God's just disposition of all things.[149] Guy remarks that William's prayers were answered just as emphatically as Christ had answered Peter when he asked whether he ought to walk across the water in Matthew 14: 28-9.[150] Having exercised appropriate prudence, no reverse disrupted the king's plans at all: 'God granted you [King William] everything according to your desires'.[151]

Guy represents the order that William's achievement had instilled by means of the careful manipulation of maritime imagery - of the 'ocean of this world' metaphor, which had its roots in the writings of Origen.[152] This was a trope that remained prominent in the English historical tradition well into the twelfth century, as later examples shall attest. His rendering of the fleet's embarkation is worth quoting at length:

> Immediately all were of one mind and purpose – to entrust themselves to the sea, now calm at last. Although dispersed, all arrive rejoicing, and run instantly to take up position. Some step the masts, others then hoist the sails ... The ships cast off their

[145] See: Sønessyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 173.
[146] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 276-91.
[147] *Carmen*, 6-7.
[148] *Carmen*, 4-5 [Tempora qui fecit, temperat, atque regit].
[149] *Carmen*, 4-7.
[150] *Carmen*, 7; 7 n.3.
[151] *Carmen*, 6-7 [Cum pro uelle tibi cuncta Deus tribuit].
[152] See: S. I. Sobecki, *The Sea and Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge, 2012), especially 36-7; 37 n. 59.

> moorings and put out to sea in orderly formation. The day was already closing in, the setting sun departing, when your ship raced ahead and took the lead ... The lanterns on the masts with their strong beams of light direct the ships on a straight course over the sea. But you, fearful that the dark night could harm your men or an adverse wind should stir up the waves, order the ships to heave to, held by their crooked anchors; and thus you create a harbour on the open sea.[153]

Evident at the outset of the above passage is that its guiding theme is unity. All of the invading force was of one mind - that is, they had freely chosen to assist with the duke's conquest of England. They were also of 'one' purpose, although, as we have noted, medieval and classical notions of the ends of human activity held that there was no contravention of unity when a multiplicity of lesser ends were referred to a higher purpose. Each soldier or sailor's individual duties and individual purposes for acting were thus referred to higher, unified purposes, presumably those of instilling order in England and attaining a oneness with God. As the sun literally sets on the English kingdom, darkness falls, attended by the suggestion that even those who willed the good might not have known how to effect good ends without the duke's guidance.[154] William's ship takes the lead of the flotilla to guide the way through the darkness and dispel any fear.[155] It is unclear whether lanterns were lofted atop the masts of his ship alone, or the masts of each ship. If the latter, this might have signalled the role that friendship would thereafter occupy in their pursuit of shared immediate and ultimate ends. That the flotilla cut a straight course, unhindered by the contingent forces of wind, wave, or tide, insinuates that *his* subjects encountered no impediment in the pursuit and attainment of their collective *telos*. William exhibits temperance and prudence even in a moment of apparent control and tranquillity. His first priority is that his ships reach the safety of harbour, a term metaphorically synonymous with salvation.[156] This whole allegory, as I mentioned, resonates with analogy with Lucan's proud Caesar from *Pharsalia V*. Lucan told how Caesar had convinced the humble and innocent fisherman Amyclas to ferry him across the Adriatic despite omens that a storm was brewing.[157] Caesar had persuaded Amyclas to embark on the voyage in spite of his better judgement, and inevitably the pair encountered a violent sea.[158] Lucan is clear that the storm had been the manifestation of the gods' anger at Caesar's arrogance.[159] Caesar challenged the gods to stop him, and risked the life of the humble who followed him, but at the height of peril, as his boat was hurled back to Greece by a rogue wave, his famous fortune,

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[153] *Carmen*, 6-9 [Protinus una fuit mens omnibus, equa uoluntas, | Iam bene pacato credere se pelago. | Quamquam diuersi tamen adsunt letificati; | Nec mora; quisque suum currit ad officium. | Sublimant alii malos; aliique laborant | Erectis malis addere uela super | . . . |Hactenus adfixe soluuntur littore puppes, | Equor et intratur agmine compositio. | Iam breuiata dies, iam sol deuexus abibat, | Cum tua preripuit preuia nauis iter. | . . . | Imposite malis permulta luce laterne | Tramite directo per mare uela regunt. | Set ueritus ne dampna tuis nox inferat atra, | Ventus et aduerso flamine turbet aquas, | Sistere curua iubes compellat ut anchora puppes; | In medio pelagi litus adesse facis. | Ponere uela mones, exspectans mane futurum, | Vt lassata nimis gens habeat requiem].
[154] *Carmen*, 8-9.
[155] *Carmen*, 8-9.
[156] *Carmen*, 8-11. Sobecki, *The Sea and Medieval English Literature*, especially 36-7; 37 n. 59.
[157] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 278-81.
[158] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 280-83.
[159] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 284-9. See also, M. Matthews, *Caesar and the Storm: A Commentary on Lucan De bello ciuili, Book 5 lines 476-721* (Bern, 2008), especially 230.

*fortuna Caesaris*, preserved his life.[160] This episode and its reception is of considerable import for the remainder of this study. In contrast to Caesar's conduct in that instance, humble William had refused to set sail for England and risk the life and salvation of his followers while the omens remained unfavourable. William seeks divine favour and does not deign to act without it. His virtue had ensured that his fleet would not encounter any disruption.

Guy's narrative proemium is an allegorical tour-de-force, praising the proper establishment of a society unified in service of God. Where William of Poitiers handled his use of analogy to carefully compare William the Conqueror and Caesar's attributes and achievements, Guy's Caesar analogy conveyed an unambiguous and compelling allegorical message. Guy posited that the community had deserved divine favour because its leader and subjects had demonstrated appropriate virtues – humility, justice, love, prudence, and faith, to name a few.[161] As the next chapter shall show, later writers made extensive use of the comparison to Caesar's sea crossing when narrating the crossings of other kings and magnates – it became a common reference point around which a host of ideological points were expressed. For Guy, order was within reach for a community whose leader had earned and continued to earn divine favour, and went on to put it to good use. The next chapter shall return to the *Gesta Guillelmi* and the *Carmen*'s recourse to allegory, as we review how that generation's conceptualisation of divine favour was displaced in subsequent decades by the model of fortune's operation.

The 'New Caesar' motif was also the theme of a number of smaller verse works thought to have been composed during William's lifetime. The provenance and authorship of these poems has been treated most recently by Elisabeth van Houts.[162] These poems evince the motif's permeation beyond boundaries of genre and scope. The first poem I wish to review is of doubtful origin, and as such its dating is speculative.[163] It closes Book Six of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia anglorum*, but it has been suggested that Henry was silently quoting a poem that had originated during William's reign:[164]

> If nature denied you, Caesar, a head of hair,
> The long-haired star, William, gave it to you.[165]

This is a sophisticated metaphor on William's elevation from his 'nature' as a duke, a lowlier rank than *Caesar*, to a status that surpassed even Julius himself. William was noted for his receding hairline, but Julius had been famously bald.[166] The personal nature of this 'outdoing' flattery might suggest that the poem was a contemporary panegyric whose author had hoped to win favour by reassuring the king on a matter of personal insecurity. Its outward triviality conveyed that William

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[160] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 288-91.
[161] See: *Carmen*, 4-7.
[162] E. M. C. van Houts, 'Latin poetry and the Anglo-Norman court 1066-1135: The *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*', *Journal of Medieval History* 15 (1989), 39-62.
[163] *HA*, 411; 411 n. 238. van Houts, 'Latin poetry', 41; 41 n. 6.
[164] *HA*, 411; 411 n. 238. van Houts, 'Latin poetry', 41; 41 n. 6.
[165] *HA*, 410-11 [Cesariem Cesar tibi si natura negauit, | Hanc Willelme tibi stella comata dedit].
[166] *GR*, 508-9. *Suetonius*, *De uita caesarum*, vol. 1, 92-3.

outdid the great Roman in *every* regard: by nature and by what destiny had delivered and would continue to deliver to him. Halley's Comet, visible in 1066, was one of the super-lunar stars that were thought to process in their courses and thus symbolized the unshakable course of destiny.[167] The comet's tail metaphorically supplied the hair which William was naturally missing, and so destiny completed William as a ruler. Thus, William was superior to Caesar by nature and destiny alike.

Another brief poem, composed by Bishop Hugh-Renard of Langres in 1075 or 1076, in gratitude for the king's financial support, contains another motif about William's past and present:

> Anyone who looks into the future and who is seeing you now, will conclude: you were a duke, you are a king now, and you will be a Caesar.[168]

Elisabeth van Houts took '*Caesar*' to mean emperor, and interpreted its presence as an allusion to the supposed Norman ambition to establish an empire. I would suggest that it is also possible that '*Caesar*' referred to a ruler who effected momentous change. This might allude to the suggestion that William harboured great ambitions for his existing domain. If so, it might have been linked with reception of the *Carmen*'s allegory, the *Gesta Guillelmi*'s comparison, or else the circulation of other material that developed similar themes at length. It is impossible to know how much material of this kind may have since been lost, but one further, very pertinent example survives.

*Plus tibi fama,* or *Cesarea trophea* in the words of its probable author, the French schoolmaster Godfrey of Reims, comprises twenty-two lines of verse that explicitly praise an unnamed king for his outdoing of Caesar:[169]

> Fame has given more to you than the poet Virgil would have been able to [confer],
> And yet your fame does not arrive at the extent of your merit.
> If it properly attends he who is seeking everything about you,
> [For] by power, by intelligence, you will be greater than Caesar.
> Rome was aided by their abundant resources, by the legionary,
> Rome could achieve by wealth, in which they were top of the world.
> Whereas virtue of soul, not abundant power of state,
> calls you into royal power, makes you duke.
> May doubled ability always and everywhere yield to you,
> and may one hand push diverse peoples forward,
> You advantageously uphold laws and public right
> and you assiduously cultivate justice with piety.
> By these dignities you have provided your people easy access to God
> This work, this pursuit, will deliver sceptres to you.
> Thus you will be a king and a consul, and titled 'the Great' in both places;
> The earth will be servant to both of your realms.
> You tame the sea, you control the lands, you restrain the shore
> *by virtue* and your peace stills the middle of the English Channel.

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[167] On the courses of stars as symbolic of destiny, see: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 400-401. *DCD*, 980-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 504-6.
[168] van Houts, 'Latin Poetry', 42 [Si quis in ante uidet qui te circumspicit ex te | colligit, ante comes, rex modo, caesar erit].
[169] For the identification of the author, see: van Houts, 'Latin Poetry', 42.

Some malicious people may stay silent, for Caesar is returning, having subdued the enemy:
Caesar bears copious trophies from *his* enemy.
England has dawned on joyful days, and may extol the enemy's annihilation with applause:
Caesar has prevailed by power, by skill, by valour.[170]

With the exception of its final four lines, this poem espouses in more literal terms very similar points to those conveyed allegorically in the *Carmen*: that this was a 'New Caesar' who was fulfilling God's providential manifest by virtue rather than force of material advantage. It also invokes the metaphor of the sea having been stilled by the king's peace, although here it is linked overtly to the facilitation of the peoples' closeness to God.

The final four lines of the poem are more difficult to interpret. van Houts posited that they alluded to William's 'harrying of the North', and suggested on this basis that the poem was composed to celebrate William's recrowning in Winchester in 1070.[171] Certainly, the injunction that 'some malicious people' ought to stay silent might denote Norman victory over a rebellion, and it is true that the poem does not name Normandy at all. Yet, there is a clear preponderance throughout the work for the balanced duality of William's cross-Channel dominion: 'doubled ability', 'both places', 'both of your realms'. Moreover, the meridian of all of these appears to be the 'medias aquas', literally 'middle waters'. This is perhaps evocative of the calm Mediterranean under the *pax Romana*, but here it almost certainly refers to the midpoint of William's peace, the English Channel. The mimetic hyperbaton evident in '*medias* ***pax tua signat*** *aquas*' further accentuates the locus of the author's attention.[172] Read in the context of the remainder of the work, then, and with the *Carmen*'s maritime allegory in mind, it is more tempting to read 'some malicious people' in a strictly literal and hence moral sense. This interpretation is attractive given that the first, generic 'enemy', might, as it often did at the time, have represented the devil's temptation to ungodly and unethical

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[170] *Plus tibi fama*, ed. van Houts, 'Latin Poetry', 57. Translation my own.
[Plus tibi fama dedit quam posset musa Maronis,
Nec tamen ad meritum peruenit usque tuum.
Si bene prosequitur qui de te singula querit,
Viribus, ingenio, Cesare maior eris.
Hunc opibus largis, hunc milite Roma iuuabat,
Roma potens opibus, que caput orbis erat.
At uirtus animi, non ampla potentia rerum,
Te uocat in regnum, te facit esse ducem.
Cumque tibi late cedat geminata potestas,
Et varias gentes urgeat una manus,
Vtiliter leges et publica iura tueris
Iusticiamque frequens cum pietate colis.
His grandibus faciles aditus ad summa parasti;
Hoc opus, hoc studium, sceptra dedere tibi.
Ergo consul eris et rex, et magnus utroque;
Seruiet imperiis utraque terra tuis.
Tu mare, tu terras, tu littus utrumque coherces
Viribus et medias pax tua signat aquas.
Emula pars taceat, Cesar redit, hoste subacto:
Ampla trophea refert Cesar ab hoste suo.
Festa [dies] luxit, leto sonet Anglia plausu:
preualuit Cesar uiribus arte manu.].
[171] van Houts, 'Latin Poetry', 41.
[172] emphases my own.

behaviour, while the personalised, second, '*his* (*suo*) enemy', might have signified the progenitor of such conduct – Harold.[173] The new dawn that William brought England to enjoy banished the dark reign of those enemies of peace. The dawn also completed, perhaps intentionally, the metaphor opened in the *Carmen* when, during the Channel crossing, on the night before the invasion, William could do no more than guide his adherents through the dark night with lanterns.[174]

The phrase, 'Caesar is returning (*Cesar redit*)' also demands interpretation. van Houts suggested that this referred to William's return from the North of England, or, perhaps, his return to Normandy.[175] Given that it is *England* rejoicing, and given that Caesar's own achievements were far more readily analogous with 1066 than with the 'Harrying of the North', both of these suggestions seem unlikely. Arguably, this *is* referring to 1066, and is praising William's emergence as a 'New Caesar', for William's invasion was, in a sense, 'Caesar's' victorious return to England after more than a millennium. This might suggest that the poem was composed slightly earlier, perhaps just after the *Carmen*. At any rate, it was the providential unification of England and Normandy under one hand that dominated the author's attention. The poem further attests that a coherent model of what a 'New Caesar' ought to be had already permeated educated culture, both at the Norman court and amongst the educated culture of France, at the very dawn of Norman hegemony in England.

During William's own life, then, he was widely eulogized as a 'New Caesar' who, after his triumph at Hastings, had encountered no disruption as he sought to unify Normandy and England under a peace that facilitated the reliable attainment of good ends referred to God. The *GG*, the *Carmen*, and *Plus tibi fama* agree that anything the king commanded would necessarily be completed. Their implication was that all of his subjects, and even the cosmos itself, assented to the king's every command, just as Rome had assented to Caesar's every imperative. We read in *Pharsalia* III that:

> Caesar was all in all ... Better[, then], [that] there were more things that he was ashamed to decree than Romans were ashamed to allow.[176]

Treating the web of theoretical implications that emanate from this powerful idea is a matter for a later chapter, but it ought to be noted for now that this was a quality being openly imputed to a King of England as early as 1067. For his panegyrists, William's power stemmed from God's just guardianship of the virtuous. He never encountered setbacks because God knew his piety, his virtue, and so had chosen him to fulfil his providential will on earth, disposing that all things would be consonant with William's just commands. Even in this state, William planned to safeguard his people from any unforeseen reverse, and thereby merited God's protection all the more. The

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[173] Klein, *Augustine's Theology of Angels*, especially 149-154.
[174] The *Carmen* does complete the metaphor itself, at the conclusion of the Battle of Hastings - see: 34-5, 'After the brilliant lamp of Phoebus had shone forth and cleansed the world of its gloomy shades' [Illuxit postquam Phebi clarissima lampas | Et mundum furuis expiat a tenebris].
[175] van Houts, 'Latin Poetry', 41.
[176] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 122-3 [Omnia Caesar erat ; ... || Melius, quod plura iubere | Erubuit, quam Roma pati.].

outcome of all of this, for Godfrey of Reims, was that William had led and would continue to lead his now unified people closer to God in this life.

The historical writers of the next generation also remembered William as a Caesarean king. The *Liber Eliensis* and Orderic Vitalis's *Historia ecclesiastica* made similar points about William's Caesarean resolve, the former in the context of the King's approach to the isle of Ely in 1071, the latter whilst detailing his march on Chester in 1070.[177] According to the *Liber Eliensis*, William's men were so overcome by the enormity of reaching Ely through the marshes that many began to desert.[178] When they saw the king going ahead anyway, they 'returned to acceptance of his orders voluntarily and with pleas of supplication, they followed in the rear'.[179] The author explains,

> The king – who truly had the determination that Julius Caesar, a most exceptional commander, is reckoned to have conjured up in a dire emergency of this kind – did not deem it right to detain his men at this juncture by large amounts of exhortation or by new promises, as if they were cowardly or lacking in stamina. He nevertheless answered their queries in a few words: if they were obedient to his command, it would be to their advantage for the remainder of their undertakings; if, on the other hand, they were to desert, he was going on – to a place where matters of urgency were summoning him – and he was not afraid of being hindered by their departure from carrying through to the end, without slackness, the undertakings which had been initiated. He, for his part, proposed to overcome the greatest possible difficulties for the sake of securing tranquillity for the kingdom.[180]

The sense of this passage is essentially the same as the exhortation that Henry of Huntingdon put into Caesar's mouth in his invasion narrative – that no fear or other burst of passion would disrupt his resolve to undertake the end he had begun, and that he would prove his steadfastness by example whether his men followed him or not.[181] Orderic's rendering of the king's treacherous passage to Chester similarly emphasised that William, like Caesar, backed up his words by example:

> The king, however, maintained a calmness worthy of Julius Caesar in this crisis, and did not deign to attempt to hold them with prayers and promises. He continued on the venture he had so boldly undertaken, commanded his faithful troops to follow him, and counted any who chose to desert him as idle cowards and weaklings. He promised that the victors should enjoy rest when their great labours were over, assuring them that they could not hope to win rewards without toil.[182]

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[177] On dating the Liber Eliensis, see: *Liber Eliensis*, trans. J. Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely From the Seventh Century to the Twelfth* (Woodbridge, 2005), xxii; 224-6. *HE*, vol. 2, 234-7. Note also my argument above, that Henry of Huntingdon's Caesar narrative was intended as tacit commentary on William the Conqueror's achievement.

[178] Liber Eliensis, 225.

[179] Liber Eliensis, 225; ed. E. O. Blake (London, 1962), 191 [Subsecuti sunt ultro suppliciter ad obsequium eius redeuntes].

[180] *Liber Eliensis*, 225-6; ed. Blake, 191 [Rex uere constantiam habens, quam prestantissimus dux Iulius Cesar in tali necessitudine finxisse putatur, neque nunc dignans suos multo retinere hortatu siue nouis promissis uelud inertes atque inualidos, paucis tamen respondet: si precepto suo pareant, ad reliqua ipsis utile fore; contra, si deserant, seque, quo cause necessarie uocant, perrecturum, nec timere eorum discessu impediri, quo minus impigre peragat inchoata. Equidem tranquillitatis regno comparande queque difficillima superuadere proponit].

[181] *HA*, 32-5

[182] *HE*, vol. 2, 234-7 [Rex autem constantiam Iulii Caesaris in tali necessitate secutus est; nec eos multo precatu seu nouis promissis retinere (236) Audacter inceptum iter init, fidasque sibi cohortes se sequi

Orderic, the *Liber Eliensis*, and Henry of Huntingdon's distinct episodes are predated by a very similar anecdote in the *Gesta Guillelmi* that concerns William's determination to fight and die at Hastings rather than flee.[183]

We have seen above that Henry of Huntingdon closed his account of William the Conqueror's reign with a brief poem extolling his outdoing of Caesar. As we saw above, William of Malmesbury remarked that the duke had followed Julius Caesar's strategy for dealing with a hidden enemy.[184] He also coloured his account of the duke's crossing and arrival in England with an allusion to Suetonius' *De uita caesarum*.[185] William explains that prior to the crossing, as the Normans waited for a favourable wind, the duke's men began to question whether God was against the whole endeavour.

> A man must be mad, they said, who wants us to take over land rightfully belonging to others; God is against us, for He denies us a wind; his father had the same idea, and was prevented in the same way; there is a curse on this family – it always conceives more than it can perform and finds God in opposition to it. Such sentiments were spreading publicly, and might well weaken the resolution of brave men. So the duke, after consulting his older captains, gave orders to bring the body of St Walaric and expose it under the open sky to support prayer for a wind; and without delay their sails were filled with a favouring breeze.[186]

After the ships had 'made a smooth passage' and arrived in Hastings, William stumbled as he disembarked.[187]

> As he left the vessel, he slipped, but turned the mishap into a good omen, for the knight who was nearest cried: 'You have England in your hand, duke, and you shall be king!'[188]

Suetonius had written of Caesar that,

> No regard for religion ever turned him from any undertaking, or even delayed him. Though the victim escaped as he was offering sacrifice, he did not put off his expedition against Scipio and Juba. Even when he had a fall as he disembarked, he gave the omen a favourable turn by crying: 'I hold thee fast, Africa'.[189]

Arguably, William repurposed the anecdote about Caesar's stumble to signal the implicit contrast of the two men's religiosity. Where Caesar had tried to offer a sacrifice but failed, and had not allowed the omen to delay him, the duke made sure to do proper veneration to

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praecipit, desertores uero uelut inertes pauidosque et inualidos si discedant paruipendit. Post difficillimas fatigationes uictoribus requiem promittit; nec ad honores posse pertingere nisi per labores asserit].

[183] *GG*, 124-7.

[184] *GR*, 470-71.

[185] For this attribution, see: *GR*, vol. 2, 230.

[186] *GR*, 448-451 [insanire hominem qui uellet alienum solum in ius suum refundere; Deum contra tendere, qui uentum arceret; idem patrem uoluisse eodemque modo inhibitum; fatale illi familiae esse ut, altiora uiribus spirans, Deum aduersantem experiatur. Ista per publicum serebantur , quae possent fortium robur eneruare. (450) Dux itaque, facto cum senioribus concilio, corpus sancti Walerici foras efferri et pro uento deprecando sub diuo exponi iussit; nec mora intercessit, quin prosper flatus carbasa impleret].

[187] *GR*, 450-51 [placido cursu].

[188] *GR*, 450-51 [In egressu nauis pede lapsus euentum in melius commutauit, acclamante sibi proximo milite: 'Tenes' inquit 'Angliam, comes, rex futurus'].

[189] Suetonius, *De uita caesarum*, vol. 1, 110-13 [Ne religione quidem ulla a quoquam incepto absterritus umquam uel retardatus est. Cum immolanti aufugisset hostia, profectionem adversus Scipionem et Iubam non distulit. Prolapsus etiam in egressu navis verso ad melius omine: 'Teneo te,' inquit, 'Africa'].

God and His saints, humbled himself before the material providential signals that He communicated, and acted accordingly. William's anecdote emphasises that God had sanctioned the duke's conquest because unlike Julius he had ordered his considerations appropriately.

The *Breuis relatio de Guillelmo nobilissimo comite Normannorum*, an anonymous monk of Battle Abbey's short narrative account of Normandy and England c. 1035-1106, purports to reveal more about William's view as to the limits of foreknowledge.[190] The words, whether they were indeed William's own, must have been plausibly attributable to him. Towards unusual but otherwise immaterial events that some might have interpreted as adverse omens, they reveal a view both more Caesarean but also more orthodox and faithful.

> It is worthy to commit to the memory of writing the words which the most Christian Count William is said to have spoken when he put on his hauberk. For when a certain man handed him his hauberk to put it on, he unexpectedly offered it inside out. When William noticed this he said with a calm face and quiet mind to the soldiers who were surrounding him: 'If I believed in portents (*sortem*), I would certainly not go into battle today. But I have never believed in portents (*sortibus*), nor have I loved soothsayers (*Sortilegos*). For in everything I have ever done I have always entrusted myself to my Creator'.[191]

The Battle monk continues, saying that after William had donned his armour he reiterated his faith that God justly disposes even vexatious events: " [His] judgements, even if they are obscure, are just".[192] William's confident dismissal of the 'omen' is again redolent of Suetonius' Caesar and, like Caesar, William did not waver in his confidence to strive to effect the just and truly consequential outcomes that he hoped for. He recognised that his armour having been presented backwards was but one minor part of a divine plan whose justice he held unshakable faith in but was not privy to granular knowledge of.[193] Assuming knowledge of the complete divine plan for England and Normandy on the back of such a minute insight would have been to imprudently disregard faith in God's justice. The implication is that William did not waver in his faith that God would justly dispose the larger events of true consequence to fairly reflect the justice of his cause and the injustice of Harold's. The Battle monk's William does *not* deny that events are predestined, only that before events have run their course humans are often not privy, irrespective of what some may say upon noticing some striking happening, to what they, by their free will, have been predestined to effect.

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[190] *Breuis relatio de Guillelmo nobilissimo comite Normannorum*, ed. E. M. C. van Houts, 'The *Breuis relatio de Guillelmo nobilissimo comite Normannorum*', *Camden Fifth Series* 10, 5-48 (7, 12-14).

[191] *Breuis relatio*, 31a-31 [Dignum est autem ut memorie literisque tradatur unum uerbum quod christianissimus comes Willelmus cum lorica sua indueretur dixisse fertur. Cum enim ei quidam eandem loricam suam porrigeret, ut ex ea se indueret, ex improuiso ei illam inuersam porrexit. Quod ille animaduertens uultu placido quietoque animo militibus qui in circuitu eius erant dixit: 'Si ego in sortem crederem hodie amplius in bellum non introirem. Sed ego numquam sortibus credidi neque sortilegos amaui. In omni enim negotio quodcunque agere debui Creatori meo semper me commendaui']. Note that I have rendered 'sors' as 'portents', reflecting the apparent sense of 'sortilegos' as 'soothsayers'.

[192] *Breuis relatio*, 32a-32 [iudicia etsi sunt occulta sunt tamen iusta].

[193] Hence the distinction between such a statement and the historians' confidence that with hindsight and sufficient reliable testimony they could establish knowledge of the workings of Providence.

# CHAPTER THREE: FORTUNA CAESARIS

In Chapter One, I argued that the histories of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Robert of Lewes articulate a sophisticated model of fortune's operation. I suggested that circumstances and events forced these four historians to elaborate on the received causal paradigm, and highlighted Orderic and William's professions that an understanding of fortune and contingency was the prize that had motivated their historical enquiry. Orderic and William arrived at the same basic conclusion – that a reverse of fortune could be attributed to the specific recent sin that had engendered it. Thereafter, whether through their own efforts or as a result of the direct or indirect influence of Orderic and William's insight, the same causal schema was taken up by Henry of Huntingdon and Robert of Lewes. The model purported to be an insight into the standards and workings of divine justice, and as such it helped the historians to refine their edificatory guidance. The problem with uncovering truth is that it can sometimes be uncomfortable, and in this case the truth was that even the historians' newly-refined ethical guidance could not facilitate the wonted ethical and spiritual restoration while human actions remained under perennial threat from fortune and contingency. Sin bred disruption, which made sin inevitable, and so the cycle perpetually turned. Arguably, though, the historians recognised that hope yet remained. I shall begin to show in this chapter that their attentions were drawn to an exceptional set of circumstances that, they reckoned, had occasionally prevailed in the past, and so were probable to prevail again in the future. Their hope was that the next time that God, by His grace, disposed such circumstances, humanity might be prepared to make full use of them.

The circumstances they anticipated were associated with Julius Caesar. We have already seen that that the general's invasions of Britain were recognised as a formative moment in the island's providential journey. Memory of the invasions also informed local and national identity, and Caesar himself was recognised as the foremost secular prince of past ages.[1] Because William the Conqueror's character and achievements were so readily comparable with Caesar and his deeds, two historians seized the opportunity to convey tacit commentary on the Norman achievement through their nuanced retellings of Caesar's Britannic exploits. Where Henry of Huntingdon endorsed Caesar's, and by extension William the Conqueror's 'civil' war of unification, Geoffrey of Monmouth castigated Caesar and William for having broken the bonds of kin and compelled the island to servitude. Others eulogised or passed judgement on aspects of William's character

[1] On the claim that Caesar was regarded as the greatest secular prince in history, see: *HA*, 36-7.

through delicately-wrought comparisons of the two leaders. The comparison led to William being characterised as a New Caesar. The new Caesar type was mobilised in service of various specific points of comparison but, as I hope to argue here, it hinged on one Caesarean trait above all others. In his aged but unsurpassed *The Mantle of Caesar*, Friedrich Gundolf attributed Caesar's medieval popularity to contemporary preoccupations with:

> permanent names, eternal significances, past events, immutable traits, unhistorical and impersonal, spaceless and timeless.[2]

As such, Caesar was held to have embodied certain generic traits: 'power, ... wealth, ... bravery, ... [and] wisdom' in the positive direction, tyranny, usurpation, injustice, and vanity in the negative.[3] At a simplistic level, association of someone with Caesar's personage was to impute one or more of these attributes to them. The suggestion might be that the subject possessed that attribute in lesser, the same, or greater extent than Caesar had done, depending on the context. This was typically to support praise or censure. I wish to argue, though, that the specificities of some of these insinuations have been misconstrued.

Let us consider, hypothetically, that a historian had remarked that a king's power was equal to Caesar's. That would be to insinuate that that king's power matched that of the most powerful secular prince in history. The question then would be what was meant by this – what exactly was the nature and extent of that power? Augustine defined power as, 'the capacity to influence one's surroundings and manifest one's will in the external world'.[4] Caesar's power had enabled him to rise from obscurity, conquer huge swathes of territory for Rome, defeat Pompey Magnus and the entire senate, and alter the reckoning of time. It had only failed him as he reached, finally, for absolute and perpetual imperial authority. During the Middle Ages, Caesar's rise and fall was held to exemplify that the vicissitudes of the world had ultimately brought even the greatest secular power to nothing.[5] In *contemptus mundi* reflections on Caesar's ultimate failure, scholars have perceived authorial acknowledgements of the insignificance of human power and glory in relation to the cosmic forces that *truly* govern the world.[6] The view has prevailed that even the most powerful of human rulers were thought to be innately and inescapably subject to the vicissitudes of the cosmological *status quo*.[7] Arguably though, there was a recognition in-period that the bitterness of Caesar's eventual failures were not necessarily due to any lack of power. He did not necessarily fail in his final end because its attainment exceeded the maximal extent of his power, but rather because the apogee of his power had passed. As I shall show, contemporary opinion in fact held that for a long period, earlier in his career, the true fount of Caesar's power was not his legions, his wealth, or his tactical and strategic prowess, but rather the exceptional preponderance of good

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[2] Gundolf, *The Mantle of Caesar*, 64.
[3] Gundolf, *The Mantle of Caesar*, 80; 109-11.
[4] As quoted in: J. Guerrero van Der Meijden and K. Wilczyński, 'Reason and will: remarks on Augustine's idea of power', *Orbis Idearum* 3 (2015) 33-60, at 35.
[5] See: *HA*, 616-7.
[6] Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 47-8.
[7] Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 47-8.

fortune that attended his cause. I believe that the historians at the heart of this study realised this point. Resultantly, I consider that their reflections on the theme of *Contemptus mundi* are lamentations on the failures of past leaders *relative to their potential.* They are not absolute statements about the future inevitability of human failure in the face of fortune and contingency. Rather, they are calls to reflect on past failure and to then follow attendant lessons in order to help realise the political and hence spiritual potential of human community in the world. New Caesars were thought to bear much greater power than has hitherto been recognised.

If the historians' regard for Caesar's potential, and by extension the New Caesars' potential, has been underestimated, what in fact *was* considered to be their maximal potency? We have seen that secular leaders were charged with maintaining an order conducive to the collective unification in pursuit of good ends, amongst the highest of which was spiritual advancement. I have also shown that typically, it was understood that leaders lacked the capacity to instil such order on account of the 'inevitable' disruptions of fortune. That did not necessarily absolve them of blame for their inevitable failures. Yet, once the historians had resolved the model of fortune's operation, they were able to reappraise the old assumption that its reverses were inevitable. The model revealed that fortune's disruptions could be precluded if people, and especially leaders, could be led from committing sin. Despite that first theoretical breakthrough, in practice this must have seemed to be of little utility given that the sins of the recent past would continue to manifest reverses for some time, and so fire peoples' passions towards committing sin anew. Ethical advice and prudent leadership would help, but the consequences of contingency would, sooner or later, outstrip these moderating influences. However, Caesar had uniquely possessed the potential to transcend such impediments. The foremost literary-historical traditions emphasised Caesar's remarkable good fortune, his *fortuna Caesaris*.[8] They emphasise that this trait had made it possible to circumvent the restrictions on secular power by allowing Caesar to harness the cosmic mechanisms that otherwise intervened to limit it. While *fortuna Caesaris* persisted, Caesar's ends were contingent only on its continuance. Experiencing only *favourable* fortune, as Caesar did during this time, meant that contingency could not impede actions taken towards the attainment of any end that he desired. When analysed in light of the model, this would have indicated that fortune's visitations in this manner must have been engendered by his sins or the sins of others with whom he was causally connected in some manner, and yet the consequence of those sins empowered him to a near-limitless extent.[9] For a lay observer, it might have seemed egregious to witness a sinner ostensibly 'benefitting' from his sins and the sins of those around him. Yet, anyone who recalled the contemporary definition of justice, which was 'to render to each what they deserve', would have realised that in disposing such a preponderance of favour to Caesar, God had returned to Caesar his due – a quantity of something in a measure *other than Caesar deserved.* Caesar had not referred his temporal ends to God in the measure that God deserved, and so the most just course of action for

[8] See discussion below.
[9] For an explanation of this qualifier, see discussion below.

God was to dispose lower goods to Caesar in a measure other than Caesar deserved. Justice was a much higher good than any of the material goods that were fortune's domain, and so God's disposition of fortune was to indicate the supremacy of justice, the love for the proper order of things, over desire for lesser goods for their own sake. Boethius had expounded that God did this to encourage those who experienced fortune to reform and strive for justice so that they might grow to deserve that which they had come to possess.[10] This was to prompt them to cease their fixation on lower goods, and instead refer what they possessed to the attainment of higher goods. What was intriguing about Caesar's example is that, as exemplified by *fortuna Caesaris*, God had disposed lower goods to him in such quantity and with such constancy that essentially nothing had remained to impede his progress towards those higher goods. Of course, Caesar had not been party to Christian revelation, and so his personal circumstance offered him and his people no potential for spiritual advancement. Yet, in this chapter I intend to show that the historians believed that hope yet remained for the future. They did not believe that *fortuna Caesaris* had been limited to Julius Caesar himself, but that it was a state that God's grace had also extended to several other leaders at various points in history. The primary reason they had characterised these leaders as New Caesars, I would like to suggest, is that because they too had experienced a window of time during which God, through fortune, granted them the power to attain ends unimpeded by contingency. I reason that their hopes for an ethical restoration rested on an expectation that God, by His grace, would similarly extend *fortuna Caesaris* to some future leaders. If so, then such a leader, if allied with the model's insights into objective justice, might guide them towards the institution of perfect order in the world. The following chapters will consider this theory as it manifest in the historians' works, and discuss how historians imagined that New Caesars had deployed or would deploy this power in order to serve a either a twisted sense of self-advancement, or, alternatively, the greater good.

First it needs to be shown that the historians regarded the underlying premise to be viable: that, for a time, an agent could benefit from fortune so completely that contingency would not impede their pursuit of ends. This necessitates familiarising ourselves with the ancient understanding of *fortuna Caesaris*. Then, we shall proceed to examine the historians' familiarity with and adaptation of those ideas. Finally, we must question how such conceptions were repurposed or adapted to serve a deliberative, ethical purpose.

[10] *DCP*, 374-9.

The ancient Romans erected more shrines to *Fortuna* than to any other deity, perhaps even Jupiter.[11] They believed that Fortune's favour was made manifest in *felicitas* – a state in which one is able to shape the world around one according to one's desires and so experience blessedness/happiness.[12] As such, leaders were expected to prove that fortune regarded them favourably.[13] Amongst those who were said to have benefitted from an unusually constant favour of fortune were Gaius Marius and Pompey Magnus.[14] Pompey's *felicitas* was reportedly such that it 'brought about the support of the citizens [of Rome], the allegiance of the allies, the submission of the enemy, and even the favour of the winds and storms'.[15] For the present purposes it is important to note the belief that good fortune could turn even the forces of nature to one's favour. Pompey cast the first coin to bear a representation of *Fortuna*, but no Roman leader was as vaunted for his favourable fortune as Julius Caesar. This image was not just a figment of the literary imagination of later years. Caesar was acutely attuned to the need to portray himself as one who had been blessed with an especial preponderance of fortune's favour.[16] He wrote in *De bello gallico* of the sole contingency he had encountered upon landing in Britain – that the transports ferrying his cavalry to the island had been blown off course, which had left him unable to win as decisive a victory as he had planned.[17] He called this the, 'one thing [that] was lacking to complete Caesar's pristine fortune'.[18] Caesar's continuator later wrote of his men's trust in their general's *fortuna*.[19] There was widespread contemporary and near-contemporary debate about Caesar's claim that he possessed his own special fortune.[20] It is clear that Caesar attempted to lay personal claim to the source of Roman *felicitas*, and displace the notion of the common *Fortuna Romani populi*.[21] He seems to have hoped that this would help legitimise his concentration of power in the office of dictator or even, perhaps, emperor.

Unquestionably, the most prominent treatment of Caesar's fortune was in Lucan's hugely influential epic, *Pharsalia*. In the words of Monica Matthews, 'Caesar is portrayed throughout the poem as both reliant on and blessed by Fortuna'.[22] Therein, examples of fortune's constancy towards Caesar abound, but for the present purposes we are most interested in establishing its

[11] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 112.
[12] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 113
[13] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 115.
[14] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 113-14.
[15] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 114.
[16] On Pompey's issue of coinage: Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 124.
[17] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, 214-15.
[18] Caesar, *De belo gallico*, 214-15. Translation my own.
[19] P. R. Murphy, 'Caesar's continuators and Caesar's 'felicitas'', *The Classical World* 79 (1986), 307-17, at 316.
[20] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 125.
[21] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, 112-16; 125-7.
[22] Matthews, *Caesar and the Storm*, 82.

argument as to the maximal limits of Caesar's power – that is, whilst his fortune was at its zenith. These limits are treated in two episodes. Towards the end of the work, we are told that the Egyptian eunuch Pothinus, who had murdered Pompey Magnus, later plotted to kill Caesar so that he might depose the usurper Cleopatra.[23] Lucan, writing with the benefit of almost a century of hindsight, alluded to fortune's eventual abandonment of Caesar on the Ides of March in commenting that Pothinus' actions had aspired to 'shed blood by base-born hands – that blood with which fortune (*fortuna*) intended to drench the defeated senators'.[24] Lucan endorsed fortune's preservation of Caesar because it had ensured that the lesson (*exemplum*) of his eventual downfall had not been lost to obscurity.[25]

By far the most significant exposition of Caesar's relationship with fortune is the sea crossing passage of *Pharsalia*'s Book V, that we touched on earlier.[26] This is the tale of Caesar's nocturnal escape from his camp in Greece and procurement of passage back to Italy with Amyclas, the poor and humble fisherman. Extensive commentary exists on this set-piece but for the present purposes it will suffice to demonstrate that this is where Lucan signalled that the *magnitude* of Caesar's fortune *had never been absolute*.[27] As the passage opens, Caesar slips away form his camp in the dead of night.[28] Venturing to the shore, he chances upon the hut of a humble fisherman, Amyclas, who is initially reluctant to provide passage to Italy while nature portends the advent of a storm.[29] With bold promises of glory and rich reward, Caesar convinces Amyclas to set aside his better judgement and the pair set sail.[30] Soon after, the pair encounter the anticipated storm, and Amyclas implores Caesar to allow him to return to safety.[31] Caesar refuses, and redoubles his resolve to challenge nature and the gods.[32] In Lucan's words, 'the stars which remain fixed in the summit of the sky, seemed to be shaken'.[33] Caesar had wielded the power to move the heavens and alter the course of destiny. Through that power he had shattered the natural order and threatened a descent of the universe into total chaos, and even the gods themselves.

> Next, the dome of the gods quaked, the lofty sky thundered, and the heavens, with all their structure jarred, were troubled. Nature dreaded chaos: it seemed that the elements had burst their harmonious bonds, and that Night[34] was returning, to blend the shades below with the gods above; the one hope of safety for the gods is this – that in the universal catastrophe they have not yet been destroyed.[35]

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[23] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 614 ff.
[24] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 614-15 [Dignatur viles isto quoque sanguine dextras, | Quo fortuna parat victos perfundere patres].
[25] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 614-51.
[26] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 276-91.
[27] In particular, see: Matthews, *Caesar and the Storm*.
[28] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 276-7.
[29] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 278-81.
[30] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 278-81.
[31] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 280-83.
[32] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 282-3.
[33] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 280-81 [summis ... quae fixa tenentur | Astra polis sunt visa quati].
[34] I.e. the Stoic universal catastrophe.
[35] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 286-7 [Tum superum conuexa tremunt, atque arduus axis | Intonuit, motaque poli conpage laborant. | Extimuit natura chaos; rupisse uidentur | Concordes elementa moras, rurusque redire |

The storm with its squalls and waves serve as both a literal and metaphorical representation of the cosmological chaos that Caesar's actions sowed. In Christian thought, Origen explained that God had permitted the Devil to govern the sea, into which, following Micah 7:19, He had cast all our sins. As the Devil's work tempted humans to sin, so too their sin fuelled the waves of his sea. Even in this moment of profound peril, the great man holds fast to his confidence in fortune's continued favour:

> Caesar was confident that all dangers would make way for him. "Despise the angry sea," he cried, "and spread your sail to the raging wind. If you refuse to make for Italy when Heaven forbids, then make for it when I command. One cause alone justifies your fear – that you know not whom you carry. He is a man whom the gods never desert, whom Fortune only treats ill when she comes in answer to his prayer.[36] Burst through the heart of the storm, relying on my protection. Yonder trouble concerns the sky and sea, but not our bark, for Caesar treads the deck, and her freight shall insure her against the waves".[37]

Caesar also explains how chaos and his active instigation of chaos is always beneficial to him, 'guaranteed' as he is of fortune's favours:

> "You know not the meaning of this wild confusion: by this hurly-burly of sea and sky fortune is seeking a boon to confer on me".[38]

In defying the natural order, Caesar has instigated the conditions through which he is able to prosper. Fortune takes from others, and gives everything to him, and so he consciously instigates such reverses. This episode functions as a microcosmic representation of Caesar's career: he emerges from obscurity and convinces the humble and naïve to follow him against their better judgement, leading them through untold perils, and plunging the world into an ever-deeper chaos, whose reverses he hoped would set him, 'a private citizen', upon a throne.[39] Metaphorically, he hastened the catastrophe, the *metacosmesis*, in order to reshape the whole cosmos *around him*.[40] Lucan's preoccupation was to show that the magnitude of *fortuna Caesaris* had never *quite* matched the scale of Caesar's ambitions. As the storm intensifies, and the waves grow to such an intensity that Caesar senses his fortune has at last met its match, he glimpses the inevitability of his personal failure. The forces of nature, of contingency, overwhelm the boat and cast it atop a freak wave back to the Greek shore from which it had departed.[41] Even in this moment of dire peril, Caesar's fortune saves his life, and yet in its confrontation with nature, the gods, and destiny, it had at last been outmatched. Lucan thus established for posterity that Caesar's fortune had not been absolute,

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Nox manes mixtura deis ; spes una salutis, |Quod tanta mundi nondum periere ruina]. See: Colish, *The Stoic Tradition*, vol. 1, 255-6.

[36] i.e. when Caesar has to bother to ask for fortune's aid.

[37] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 282-3 [Fisus cuncta sibi cessura pericula Caesar | "Sperne minas" inquit "pelagi uentoque furenti | Trade sinum. Italiam si caelo auctore recusas, | Me pete. Sola tibi causa est haec iusta timoris, | Vectorem non nosse tuum, quem numina numquam | Destituunt, de quo male tunc fortuna meretur, | Cum post uota uenit. Medias perrumpe procellas | Tutela secure mea. Caeli iste fretique, | Non puppis nostrae, labor est: hanc Caesare pressam | A fluctu defendet onus].

[38] 282-3 [Quid tanta strage paretur, | Ignoras: quaerit pelagi caelique tumultu, Quod praestet Fortuna mihi].

[39] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 288-9 [privatum]; cf. 288 n. 2.

[40] See: Colish, *The Stoic Tradition*, vol. 1, 255-6.

[41] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 288-91.

and that certain ambitions had escaped even his power. This episode proved phenomenally popular during the Middle Ages and alongside Virgil's *Aeneid* it seems to have helped to establish sea crossings as the appropriate narratological space to work allegories on a leader's sinfulness and also their approach towards, experience of, and capacity to overcome adversity.

*The first post-conquest generation: William the Conqueror, Providence, and the telos*

In the previous chapter and above, I began to touch upon the post-conquest mobilisation of the 'ocean of this world' metaphor. We have reviewed the ancient belief that Caesar had actively instigated contingency for the benefit it brought him – his challenge of nature engendered the storm which he sailed (over)confidently through, reliant on *fortuna Caesaris*. By contrast, eleventh-century writers praised William the Conqueror for having quieted the literal and metaphorical sea. William's prudence and his love of justice secured divine favour that kept disorder away from his cause and, later, away from his kingdom. While Caesar's *modus operandi* first-and-foremost benefitted him, William the Conqueror's clearly benefitted all of his community. Here I wish to return to the eleventh-century histories to reiterate that the primary thrust of their praise for William the Conqueror was that he had facilitated his and his peoples' avoidance of contingency. Later, we shall see how, from the perspective of some during the twelfth century, that the achievement they imputed to the king would have been regarded as naïve or at least incomplete.

We have seen that the contemporaries of the Norman Conquest penned historical eulogies to William the Conqueror and his achievement in both verse and prose. I have suggested that through various overt and tacit means, writers expressed what they believed this achievement represented for the political and salvific lot of the newly-unified peoples. In service of this end, they repurposed and reshaped imagery and commonplaces deriving from the Bible and the classical canon.[42] At the time, and at least until Lucan took centre stage early in the twelfth century, the most influential classical narrative work was Virgil's *Aeneid*. Virgil's legacy is writ large in the visual/material as well as the textual evidence of the conquest.[43] Elisabeth van Houts has suggested that the image of a golden child represented on the bow of William the Conqueror's ship had been inspired by the Christian interpretation, popularised by Augustine, that the child of Virgil's fourth Eclogue represented Christ.[44] Further, that at the time of the Norman Conquest, the image had come to prophesy the dawn of a new golden age.[45] Other recent works argue that contriving some Virgilian analogy conferred secular prestige upon the Normans, suggested that Duke William had matched or outdone Aeneas in various ways, and signalled that his dynasty was an 'inheritor of Rome'.[46] I do not disagree with these points but, as we have touched upon already, there was more

[42] See: T. O'Donnell, 'The *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* and the poetics of 1067', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 39 (2016), 151-67. Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past'.
[43] T. A. Heslop, 'Regarding the spectators of the Bayeux Tapestry: Bishop Odo and his circle', *Art History* 32 (2009), 223-49, especially 236. van Houts, 'Latin poetry'. Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 475. E. M. C. van Houts, 'The echo of the conquest in Latin sources: Duchess matilda, her daughters, and the enigma of the golden child', in P. Bouet et al. (eds.), *The Bayeux Tapestry. Embroidering the Facts of History* (Caen, 2004), 135-54.
[44] van Houts, 'The echo of the conquest in Latin sources', 135-54. *DCD*, 411.
[45] van Houts, 'The echo of the conquest in Latin sources', 135-54. *DCD*, 411.
[46] See, for instance: Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', especially 468-72. D. Bates, *The Normans and Empire* (Oxford, 2013), 24.

to it than that. As is so often the case in medieval writing, higher registers of meaning reside atop apparently base details. What follows suggests that at least one of the first-generation conquest narratives made use of Fulgentian allegory on a believer's journey through their life, led by Duke (later King) William, to unity with God and salvation. This would have followed the precedent of Fulgentian allegory on Aeneas' journey from Troy to his defeat of Turnus in Italy. This was to expresses that William's followers had experienced fewer contingencies than had the followers of Aeneas, and hence that the king outdid the famous Trojan, most fundamentally, in keeping his dependants away from those forces that threatened to disrupt their life and salvific journey. My analysis shall offer special regard to those passages of the histories that detail the Norman invasion flotilla's crossing of the English Channel.

As we have touched on, the grandeur of the Norman invasion flotilla excited the sensibilities of William of Poitiers and the author of the *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio* (hereafter *Carmen*). Their accounts of the crossing concur that seasonal rough seas had initially delayed the Norman invasion flotilla from sailing for England, and that Duke William, while he waited for more favorable conditions, had turned to prayer in the hope that God might indicate his favor and calm the English Channel.[47] An unseasonably positive turn of the weather followed, which was interpreted as signaling divine approval for the entire enterprise.[48] This divine assistance was taken to indicate William's legitimacy, virtue, and piety.[49] William of Poitiers suggested that King William shared his own belief in a very straightforward, immanent divine justice, whose rationality could be readily discerned:

> '[Duke William, a] wise and Christian man, was firmly convinced that the omnipotence of God, which wills no evil, would not allow a just cause to fail...'[50]

Despite their authorial professions of confidence in providence, in this quote and throughout their passages, both William of Poitiers and the author of the *Carmen* stress that the success of the enterprise and the safety of those who embarked upon it had been the duke's responsibility. The justice of the duke's cause, and the righteousness of his leadership, had vouchsafed both their passage and their capacity to pursue their desired ends. These writers did not yet place a leader's moral qualities under the same systematic scrutiny as William of Malmesbury and some of his contemporaries later would. They had not yet established the precise nature of the connection between conduct and exposure to contingency. However, they still showed that a leader's moral conduct bore the responsibility for engendering more favorable (or, presumably, unfavorable) cosmic circumstances. The later eleventh century, like the twelfth, subscribed to the belief that Providence accorded human agency in its disposition of all circumstances including natural forces.

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[47] *Carmen*, 4-7.
[48] *Carmen*, 6-7.
[49] *Carmen*, 6-7.
[50] *GG*, 108-9 [Etenim constabat uiro catholico ac sapienti, quod omnipotentia Dei, nihil uolens iniquum, iustam causam cadere non sineret].

Emily Winkler has capably exposited many aspects of Duke William's outdoing of Aeneas as they are articulated by the *Gesta Guillelmi*.[51] Duke William had not just founded a famous dynasty, but had re-founded and perpetuated one that had never been defeated - one that ought to have already possessed England by right of the Norman's Viking ancestry.[52] The Trojans, by contrast, had taken a land with which they had no ancestral connection, having fled in defeat from the ruins of a sacked Troy.[53] Winkler reasons that this, 'appropriates the poet's approval, permitting Poitiers to portray William as a hero like Aeneas, but one with greater control of his situation and his destiny'.[54] She notes Poitiers' implication that while Aeneas had needed Neptune to save him from Aeolus' fury, and had remained at the mercy of the whims of various lesser gods, Duke William had earned the support of the one, all-powerful God.[55] Poitiers mentioned the *Aeneid* explicitly as he described William feasting upon the open sea during his voyage.[56] He remarked that such a deed would have been worthy of narration in the *Aeneid*'s pages, implying that neither Aeneas, nor, and perhaps more to Poitiers' delight, Virgil, had ever countenanced anything so grand.[57] Winkler concludes that the assertion of Norman superiority to Rome was paramount to Poitiers' authorial strategy.[58] Winkler's points are valid, but this leaves the matter of the ends to which William turned his power. Obviously, he conquered England, but what other achievements did these authors attribute to him, and might some of these expressions have been overlooked?

Briefly, I wish to argue that the *Carmen*, and possibly also the *Gesta Guillelmi*'s narratives leant on contemporary understanding of the *Aeneid* in an additional compelling way. Since the late fifth-century grammarian Fulgentius, there had been a tradition of interpreting the *Aeneid* as a coherent allegory on the stages of human life.[59] On the allegorical level, the Trojan shipwreck from Book I of the *Aeneid* had usually been understood to represent of the chaos of infancy.[60] It was thought that each of the *Aeneid*'s twelve books corresponded, similarly, to a distinct stage of a human life.[61] Might these texts have also been allegories on the stages of the Norman subjects' own lives in the structuring and content of its narrative? There is no direct evidence for the production of original works of Virgilian allegoresis in England in the decades after the conquest, although the absence of evidence of original work in those specific decades does not preclude the ongoing influence of the earlier authorities. Manuscripts of the allegorical commentary tradition certainly *were* produced during the period.[62] There is ample attestation that allegorical reading of the *Aeneid* was common in England during the twelfth century, and in fact a number of original

[51] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 468-72.
[52] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 472.
[53] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 470.
[54] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 470.
[55] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 470.
[56] *GG*, 112-3. Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 469.
[57] *GG*, 112-3. Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', 469.
[58] Winkler, 'The Norman Conquest of the classical past', especially 467; 472.
[59] See: C. Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the Aeneid From the Twelfth Century to Chaucer* (Cambridge, 2006),96-97. L. G. Whitbread, *Fulgentius the Mythographer* (Columbus OH, 1971), 105-53, especially 122.
[60] Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England*, 96.
[61] Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England*, 96-7.
[62] Whitbread, *Fulgentius*, 105; 112-14.

twelfth-century English commentaries survive that are today known only by the names of the manuscripts in which they are found.[63] All of those exhibit a strong interest in the *Aeneid*'s allegorical register.[64] Likewise, numerous manuscripts of Fulgentius' own *Expositio* survive from the tenth to early-twelfth centuries.[65] The Fulgentian traditions were clearly held in some regard: During the mid-twelfth century, for instance, John of Salisbury went to the effort of recording a summary of the Fulgentian analysis – that the *Aeneid* represented the stages of human life - in his *Policraticus*.[66]

If we can assume that the generation to which these historians belonged likely retained an interest in the *Aeneid*'s allegorical meaning, and had access to commentary traditions that explicated that meaning, then the historians' repeated invocations of Virgil might have served to alert an audience that their text, too, was broadcasting on the allegorical as well as the literal frequency. I wish to argue that to an audience familiar with the Fulgentian tradition, the crossing depiction conveyed one half of a microcosmic representation of William's leadership. This expressed the guidance of his subjects through their mortal lives, towards a final confrontation with their sins and, at length, salvation. The *Carmen* and *Gesta Guillelmi* both stress the unifying impulse that William's plans supplied. In the portraits of the preparations for the voyage, different tradesmen, sailors, and soldiers came together and, though they individually performed their designated roles, all act in service of a collective, higher end.[67] William led his subjects from the unknowing chaos of infancy to the determination of more productive ends that served a higher purpose.

Once those ends had been identified and the will turned towards them, contingency and temptation might still have caused William and his subjects to stray. For the Fulgentian allegorists, these were the challenges of youth, which were represented by the Trojans' storm-tossed and sometimes listless seaborne wanderings around the Mediterranean in the first half of the *Aeneid*.[68] Here, again, is the 'ocean of this world' metaphor. While crossing the English Channel, that is, while navigating this crucial stage of life where worldly vicissitudes severely imperil the soul, the duke spectacularly outdid not only Caesar, as we have seen, but also Aeneas, for William's flotilla had *not* been tossed by waves, *nor* scattered by winds, *nor* destroyed by tides.[69] Although some of the duke's ships were known to have landed away from the main fleet, and their crews killed, Guy did not mention this at all, and Poitiers reserved the information for a later aside.[70] Care seems to have been taken that the literal course of events did not distract from the salvific truth at which the allegory drove.

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[63] Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England*, especially 101-135. Baswell, 'The medieval allegorisation of the '*Aeneid*', 181-237.
[64] Baswell, 'The medieval allegorisation of the '*Aeneid*', 189.
[65] Whitbread, *Fulgentius*, 105. Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England*, 97.
[66] Baswell, 'The medieval allegorisation of the '*Aeneid*', 189.
[67] *GG*, 102-3. *Carmen*, 6-7.
[68] Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England*, 96.
[69] *Carmen*, 6-9. *GG*, 110-113.
[70] *GG*, 142-3.

Even when material circumstances are put in place that will not inhibit one's spiritual advancement, it still falls to the individual to wage and win the contemplative war against the enemy, the devil, if they are to attain salvation. The allegorists held that the *Aeneid* represented this stage of life through the Trojans' arrival in Italy, and their ensuing struggle against the chief antagonist Turnus, who Virgil represented as the gatekeeper of their destiny - their *ultimate* challenge.[71] The *Gesta Guillelmi* is overt in comparing Harold to Turnus.

> Against Harold, who was such a man as poems liken to Hector or Turnus, William would have dared to fight in single combat no less than Achilles against Hector, or Aeneas against Turnus.[72]

Reference and allusion to the *Aeneid* abound in the *Gesta Guillelmi* and the *Carmen*.[73] I have suggested that these histories' indebtedness to Virgil's epic and the tradition of Virgilian allegoresis likely runs rather deeper than has previously been noted. Orderic Vitalis later wrote that the *Carmen* had been written in emulation of the *Aeneid*, although he did not elaborate further.[74] The *Gesta* and *Carmen* treated William's crossing of the Channel very carefully, especially in their obsessive recourse to symbolic representations of order and progress. Their literal register narrates the unification of peoples under a single leader, while they simultaneously allegorize how this aided his subjects' salvation. How closely this leant on the Fulgentian tradition of Virgilian commentary is difficult to prove, given the obscurity that surrounds these specific decades' regard for Virgilian allegoresis and allegorical reading of the *Aeneid*, but the weight of evidence and the neatness of the correspondence is compelling. I concur with Winkler's thesis that William was portrayed as having outdone Aeneas in various feats of strength, valour, and grandeur. The outdoing that really mattered, though, has not received the attention it deserves. Where Aeneas had lacked the power to prevent the Trojans from being blown around the Mediterranean, and had founded a transient, earthly city, William the Conqueror had demonstrated the capacity to keep his people apart from contingency, lead them to success against the metaphorical enemy, and so attain salvation and the heavenly city. William, by virtue of his conduct more than just his identity, had secured the divine favour that was the source of that power.

The eleventh-century historians' arguments are as elegant as they are rich in meaning, but their subject matter was unusually conducive to the formulation of what, ultimately, came to be remembered as an overly-reductive worldview. Their assessments of the merits of protagonists corresponded to the outcomes they experienced. Any disharmonic details were peripheral and could easily be side-stepped. As we shall see, from the perspective of the twelfth century, this was to have denied appropriate regard to the complexities of the temporal workings of Providence, and so was a naïve, or at any rate an incomplete worldview. The eleventh-century historians had not yet

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[71] Whitbread, 134-5.
[72] *GG*, 134-7 [Cum Heraldo, tali qualem poemata dicunt Hectorem uel Turnum, non minus auderet Guilelmus congredi singulari certamine, quam Achilles cum Hectore, uel Aeneas cum (136) Turno].
[73] *GG*, xviii; xxii; xxxix; xl; 190. *Carmen*, xvii; xxvi; xlvii
[74] *HE*, vol. 2, 184-7.

resolved the model of fortune that their twelfth-century counterparts expressed. In fact, they had not incorporated *fortuna* into their explanatory paradigm at all. The model's emergence in the early twelfth century emphasised the ostensible impossibility of conforming to the standards of objective justice whilst suffering contingency's disruptions. In this sense, the eleventh-century historians only give us half of the story of William the Conqueror. They had related that he had come to deserve divine favour, and that through the power that bestowed on him he was able to unify his people and lead them to salvation. They had not related the means by which he had first escaped from contingency's impediments in order to conduct himself in the manner that had deserved that favour. Posterity also would have had reason to doubt the convenient simplicity of the eleventh-century arguments on the basis that swathes of William's reign had been beset by setbacks and deeds of questionable morality.[75] His crossing might have benefitted from the intercession of St Waleric, and his achievements might fairly have been accorded as truly great, but despite contemporary eulogies to the contrary, contingency had reasserted itself even while he still lived. Either William's power had not, after all, been as great as suggested, or else he had at some point fallen short of the standards expected of him by God and His objective justice. As we shall now see, some of the historians of the twelfth century realised that for the instillation of true and lasting order, the puzzle of fortune and contingency still needed a solution.

[75] See, for instance: Hagger, *William: King and Conqueror*, 85-110; 151-73.

*The next generation: Fortuna Caesaris and overcoming contingency*

The first generation of post-conquest historians - William of Poitiers, William of Jumièges, and the author of the *Carmen* - did not make any substantive use of the term or concept *fortuna* in their works. The *Gesta Guillelmi* only mentions the term once, in the comparison of Caesar and William the Conqueror that we reviewed in the last chapter.[76] The *Carmen* also mentions it once, as William the Conqeuror turns the rallying cry of the *Aeneid*'s Turnus against the new Turnus and his army.[77] In resolving to push on his attack at the Battle of Hastings, '...[William] reckoned that, if he acted with courage, fortune would smile upon him, and, without deceit, grant him all his desires'.[78] By contrast, the term *fortuna* proliferated in the works of the subsequent generation. These later authors mentioned it scores of times.[79]

In Chapter One we touched on the possible reasons for the suddenness of *fortuna*'s adoption by twelfth-century historians. I argued that foremost amongst these impulses was the desire to refute King William II Rufus' providential scepticism. The historians who narrated Rufus' reign scarcely held back from attributing various provocative utterances to the king. It appears that his scepticism mostly pertained to the church's claims about the efficacy of divine justice in the world. Eadmer and William of Malmesbury allege, for instance, that he became frustrated with what he saw as the arbitrary outcomes of trial by ordeal.[80] They write that Rufus often questioned why God ought to concern himself with the affairs of men, and add that he sometimes expressed doubt in divine omniscience.[81] The king's claims have been characterised as salvoes against the 'expanding claims of priest and pope'.[82] We have also seen that Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury's disputes with Rufus are well attested. The king proved morally incorrigible and showed a flagrant disregard for the rights and claims of Anselm and other churchmen who did not bend to his will. The challenge of a sceptical king likely renewed efforts to demonstrate the moral ordering and justice of God's disposition of events, as Carl Watkins has discussed:

> ... whether the views [of Rufus] ... were truly his or not, their prominence in the narratives suggests that they were *seen* as a menace that needed to be countered by the chroniclers. For the idea of a world robbed of divine providence was, to William of Malmesbury's mind, 'beyond all madness'. As far as he and Eadmer were concerned, to say or even think such a thing was tantamount to being an unbeliever. ... This explains why divine providence became a salient theme of chronicle treatments of Rufus. The king is turned into an *exemplum* of how dangerous such ways of thinking might be. *For*

[76] *GG*, 172.
[77] *Carmen*, 30.
[78] *Carmen*, 30 [Censet enim, uirtute sibi fortuna fauebit, | Subueniet uotis et sine fraude suis].
[79] A comprehensive list is supplied at the beginning of Chapter One.
[80] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44.
[81] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44.
[82] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44.

> *all Rufus's iniquities, his reign, as Eadmer observed, had been attended by a great deal of good fortune. And so how was this to be explained?*[83]

The final two sentences here are of especial relevance for our purposes. Narration of Rufus' eventual downfall - his death due to accident or assassination in the New Forest - reasserted the providential logic that bad people inevitably meet their comeuppance in the end. In-period, writers explained that he had experienced such good fortune for so long because God had been encouraging him to reform. This reasoning is plainly Boethian in origin, and as we have seen Archbishop Anselm himself was numbered amongst those who expressed this justification of the divine rationale behind Rufus' fortune. This was, and has since remained, a neatly pre-packaged answer to the question of how God could have permitted Rufus' extraordinary fortune, and one that scholars have been satisfied to accept.[84] I do not deny that it did summarise *part* of the contemporary understanding. Yet, as I shall argue below, there were other aspects too, and these proved integral to historians' attempts to discern a 'solution' to the ethical problems described by the model.

Remarkably, some of the historians appear to have made an especial point of defining the maximal limits of Rufus' fortune. They achieved this, I contend, through strong and carefully manipulated allusion to Caesar's sea crossing from *Pharsalia* V. This was accomplished with respect to the narration of Rufus' crossing of the stormy English Channel in 1099 – a deed so brash that it stunned the kingdom and captivated later writers. Each of the second generation of post-conquest historians handled the retelling of that event slightly differently.

William of Malmesbury's typically rich account is notable because it overtly signals that contemporaries perceived an analogy between Rufus and Caesar's actions.[85] Therein, the king, hearing that the royal possession of Le Mans was under siege, resolved to cross the English Channel without delay:[86]

> To the nobles who urged that he must summon an army and fit it out, his reply was: 'I shall see who will follow me. Do you suppose I shall be short of support? If I know my young men, they will willingly come to me, even at the risk of shipwreck.' In this fashion he arrived at the sea coast almost alone. The sky was overcast, the wind against him, the sea lashed into waves by the fury of the blast. He wished to cross at once; the sailors begged him to wait until the deep grew calmer and the winds relented. 'Why,' said the monarch, 'I never heard of a king being drowned. Cast off at once, and you will find the elements in league to obey me'.[87]

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[83] Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44. Emphasis my own.
[84] See: Watkins, 'Providence, experience, and doubt', 44.
[85] *GR*, 566-7.
[86] *GR*, 564-7.
[87] *GR*, 564-7 [Ammonentibus ducibus exercitum aduocandum, paratus componendos, 'Videbo' ait 'quis me sequetur. Putatis me non habiturum homines? Si cognoui iuuentutem meam, etiam naufragio ad me uenisse uolet.' Hoc igitur modo pene solus ad mare peruenit. Erat tunc nubilus aer et uentus contrarius; flatus uiolentia terga maris uerrebat. Illum statim transfretare uolentem nautae exorant ut pacem pelagi et uentorum clementiam operiatur. 'Atqui' inquit rex 'numquam audiui regem naufragio interisse. Quin potius soluite retinacula nauium; uidebitis elementia iam conspirata in meum obsequium'].

Prominent in this excerpt is the juxtaposition of the nobles and the young men. Age was taken as a metonym for wisdom, and so in essence Malmesbury has the king admit that only the foolish would follow him.[88] On the allegorical register, shipwreck often signified spiritual damnation, and so over and above the obvious mortal peril explicit in its literal meaning, the account emphasises the consequence of Rufus' profound recklessness. That the king arrived at the coast almost alone attested that few, even of the young, were foolish enough to be led to such assuredly sinful disregard for the manifest natural order. The king's exhortation to cast off and witness the elements fall into obeisance is reminiscent of Caesar's arrogant entreaty to Amyclas in *Pharsalia*, but the punchline that follows surprises: '[Rufus] crossed the Channel, and hearing the news of his arrival, the besieging forces melted away'.[89] To some of Caesar's contemporaries, and to posterity alike, it probably seemed that the magnitude of his fortune was unbounded, but as we saw above Lucan had been careful to emphasise that that had never been the case. Even at its height, *fortuna Caesaris* had still left Caesar on the wrong side of *some* reverses – certain of his most ambitious ends had still proven themselves vulnerable to the disruptions of contingency. And yet, here was a King of England whose fortune surpassed even Caesar's in its magnitude. Given that William of Malmesbury elsewhere stated explicitly that Caesar had relied upon his fortune to harness the power of contingency, it is difficult to countenance that he did not recognize the logical argument that he was positing in shaping his account of Rufus' crossing in this fashion.[90] William's argument, then, was that whilst the favour of fortune lasted, Rufus had been able to attain *any* end. Any reverse he experienced was no true contingency in that it always manifested to *his advantage*, i.e. according to *his will*. All of this alludes to the immense potential that commentators such as Malmesbury recognized in certain of their leaders. The potential ramifications of that point are profound. For the first time, we have a glimpse of a circumstance under which contingency cannot impede an individual's pursuit of ends – a circumstance in which a human and their progress can escape the tyranny of worldly vicissitudes and harness cosmic forces in pursuit of whatever ends they choose.

In the remainder of his account of the Le Mans campaign, William depicts Rufus as having projected a typically-Caesarean magnanimity in the capture and immediate release of the traitorous Count Helias of Maine.[91] There is the sense in all of this that William agonized over Rufus' unwillingness to be guided by prudent counsel and the lesson of historical example, and lamented the king's headlong charge towards a wretched and fatefully Caesarean demise. Through his chosen course, the king had wasted *even more* promise and opportunity than Caesar. William underscored his belief that Rufus' willingness to repeat some of history's most famous mistakes stemmed from his ignorance of it.

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[88] See: Curtius, *European Literature*, 98-101.
[89] *GR*, 566-7 [Ponto transito obsessores eius audita fama dissiliunt.].
[90] See: *HN*, 60-1.
[91] J. Gluckauf Haahr, 'William of Malmesbury's Roman models', 165-73, at 171-2.

> Who would believe such behaviour in a man of no education? Some people, as they read their Lucan, might perhaps wrongly suppose that William borrowed the inspiration for these actions from Julius Caesar; but he never had either the interest or the leisure to pay any attention to literature. Rather, it was his innate fire of mind, and conscious valour, that drove him to [Caesarean] utterances such as these. Indeed, if our Christian faith admitted such a thing, it might be said that as the soul of Euphorbus is supposed to have passed into Pythagoras of Samos, so did the soul of Julius Caesar pass into King William.[92]

Rufus' fortune, and by extension his power, eventually fell away from its unprecedented zenith. It had outdone even Caesar's in its magnitude and constancy while it lasted and yet, it too eventually turned with the wheel that Rufus' sins had been spinning throughout. How great might Rufus' achievements have been had he reformed? As William of Malmesbury summed up Rufus' career for a final time, he passed his verdict.

> He died in the year of our Lord 1100, and the thirteenth of his reign, on 2 August, being over forty years of age. Immensely ambitious, *he would have been immensely successful*, had he been able to complete his allotted span, *or to break through the violence of fortune* (*fortunae*) *and fight his way above it.*[93]

In other words, Rufus would have been immensely successful had he lived longer and sought wisdom, or had he discovered of his own initiative the course to break the cycle of fortune and institute a state of tranquillity such as that which prevailed above the lapsarian turmoil of lowly things. As I shall show in Chapter Five, William's words hint at incipient theories for turning fortune against itself and instituting perfect order in spite of the challenges described by the model. For now, we shall review other contemporary descriptions of Rufus' crossing and summarise their arguments.

William of Malmesbury's treatment of Rufus' sea crossing and his reflections on the king's wasted career are profound, but his was not the first treatment of Rufus' crossing. William had read Eadmer's earlier account, in the latter's *Historia novorum*, which had told the story quite differently. Like the later accounts, it suggested that a storm raged as Rufus prepared to embark upon the crossing. Contrarily, though, it suggested that the sea fell still the moment that Rufus had approached it.[94] Apparently, 'the wind and even the sea itself seemed to obey him [Rufus]'.[95] This articulated the supremacy of Rufus' power over even the forces of nature, but it precluded both an explanatory recourse to fortune and clear analogy with Lucan's Caesar. In fact, Eadmer did not use the term *fortuna* at all in his historical works. He bracketed his depiction of the episode with silent invocation of the Boethian apology for why bad people sometimes seemed to prosper: that God

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[92] *GR*, 566-7 [Quis talia de illiterato homine crederet? Et fortassis erit aliquis qui, Lucanum legens, falso opinetur Willelmum haec exempla de Iulio Cesare mutuatum esse. Sed non erat ei tantum studii conscia uirtus eum talia exprimere cogebant. Et profecto, si Christianitas nostra pateretur, sicut olim anima Euforbii transisse dicta est in Pitagoram Samium, ita posset dici quod anima Iulii Cesaris transierit in regem Willelmum].
[93] *GR*, 576-7 [Obiit anno Dominicae incarnationis millesimo centesimo, regni tertio decimo, quarto nonas Augusti, maior quadragenario, ingentia presumens et ingentia, si pensa Parcarum euoluere uel uiolentiam fortunae abrumpere et eluctari potuisset, facturus]. Emphasis my own.
[94] Eadmer, *Historia nouorum*, 121.
[95] Eadmer, *Historia nouorum*, 121.

hoped, by providential benevolence of an inscrutable justice, to encourage them to become good.[96] Potential reasons for his reluctance to admit fortune into his explanatory paradigm are many, and the truth might be a combination of several of them. In the first instance, his simplistic explanations based on providence were to emphasise the total dependence of human action and achievement on divine grace. This accentuated the primacy of God's will in shaping the progression of history. With respect to Rufus and his sea crossing, it stressed that God, by his grace, had *granted* Rufus the agency to overcome natural forces. An explanation according to fortune would have suggested this also, but it would have superficially deemphasised the primacy of God's will. If Eadmer understood fortune's causes in the terms of the model, and there is no evidence that he did, this might have made it uncomfortable to suggest that that secondary causation, Rufus' sinfulness, had in some sense been 'necessary' in the sequence of events that led to God's empowerment of the king. It should also be countenanced that Eadmer wrote before the causal model of *fortuna* had emerged – a possibility which might place the model's *terminus post quem* in those early years of Orderic Vitalis and William of Malmesbury's careers.[97] Whatever the case, Eadmer had also found his own way to be very clear that Rufus' agency, while it lasted, could not be overstated.

Orderic's version of events is less overtly critical of the king, but it, too, reflects on both Rufus' imprudence, and the effects of the abundance of grace which God showed him. It omits the direct speech that so indicts the king in William and Eadmer's accounts, and sides with William in implying that the sea state remained rough as the king crossed.[98] Orderic draws in the analogy between Rufus and Lucan's Caesar in saying that the king had 'committed himself to fortune and the waves'.[99] This elides the theme of the sea crossing in Book V of *Pharsalia* with another passage from Book I of the epic. In Book I, Lucan tells us that Caesar had committed himself to fortune while crossing the Rubicon, exclaiming 'I follow you, fortune'.[100] Having mentioned fortune, Orderic then states that the king, 'following the light, was by God's guidance led safely to the port of Touques'.[101] In other words, that Rufus had followed the lights that God had created in the heavens, including in all probability the light of dawn, to port.[102] This is quite a literal rendering of a method of nautical navigation, but it pushes God's causation of this whole scenario to the forefront, and so reminds that there must have been some justice, some meaning, behind it. Orderic's narrative of the land campaign that followed Rufus' crossing is much more extensive than any other account of those events.[103] In those passages Orderic demonstrated that Rufus, unlike Caesar, had been shocked out of trusting wholly in fortune, albeit only temporarily.[104] Upon seeing

[96] Eadmer, *Historia nouorum*, 121.
[97] Eadmer wrote between 1093 and 1125. See: Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 129.
[98] *HE*, vol. 5, 256-7.
[99] *HE*, vol. 5, 256-7 [fortunae et pelago sese commisit].
[100] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 18-19 [Te, Fortuna, sequor].
[101] *HE*, vol. 5, 256-7 [setuenti luce ad portum Tolchae Deo duce] translation my own.
[102] For connotation of 'luce' with the dawn, see the Chibnall translation of this passage: *HE*, vol. 5, 257.
[103] *HE*, vol. 5, 257 n. 4.
[104] *HE*, vol. 5, 258-61. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 26

a knight standing next to him killed by a rock thrown from an enemy fortification, the king was persuaded by his counsel to act according to advice that is strikingly redolent of Vegetius' fourth general rule of war: 'it is preferable to subdue an enemy by famine, raids and terror, than in battle where fortune (*fortuna*) tends to have more influence than bravery'.[105] Orderic's account is as closely attuned as William's to Rufus' dependence on his extraordinarily favourable fortune, and is equally confident as Eadmer's that those circumstances had been disposed by God for some equitable reason. Orderic differs from William in that his narrative depicts a king whose commitment to *fortuna* was not absolute, who could at times glimpse the danger of his course, even though its seductions ultimately drew him back in.

Further accounts of Rufus' crossing were written in Latin, English, Anglo-Norman, and French.[106] Their ubiquity attests to the great interest that the daring crossing inspired. Of the remaining Latin iterations of the story, Robert of Torigni based his version on Henry of Huntingdon's.[107] Henry's is briefer than the three discussed above, but it sides with William and Orderic in its overt claim that the sea had remained rough on the voyage.[108] It also repeats a version of the purported conversation that took place between the king and, according to Henry, some sailors in the port of departure.[109] Rufus' boast to the sailors, that he had 'never heard tell of a king who drowned in the waves', captures his confidence.[110] Whether or not this utterance was a fiction, or whether it alluded to Rufus' ignorance of literature or later metaphorical shipwreck – his death and damnation – it at any rate propagated what appears to have been a sincere belief that this was a man who had, for a time, experienced the constant and absolute favour of fortune.

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[105] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 26. Vegetius, *Empitoma Rei Militaris*, 116. Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, ed. M. Reeve (Oxford, 2004), 117 [Aut inopia aut superuentibus aut terrore melius est hostem domare quam proelio, in quo amplius solet fortuna potestatis habere quam uirtus]. For discussion of the commander's obligation to avoid *fortuna*, see A. Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1978), 128-9.
[106] See: *HA*, 446 n. 126.
[107] *HA*, 446 n. 126.
[108] *HA*, 446-7.
[109] *HA*, 446-7.
[110] *HA*, 446-7 [De rege fluctibus submerso loqui non audiui].

# CHAPTER FOUR: A SATANIC CAESAR?

> You join battle keenly in mind with every kind of fortune, to ensure that when it is harsh it does not overthrow you, or when it is pleasant it does not corrupt you. Maintain the middle ground.[1]

Characterising a leader as a 'New Caesar' helped historians to define the limits of that leader's power. Some of these claims pertained to distinct aspects of conventional secular power, but others articulated that a protagonist had seemed capable of bending even cosmological forces to their will. It was sometimes suggested that leaders had benefitted from the near-total preponderance of fortune's favour, a state known as *fortuna Caesaris*. In some of these instances, the New Caesar's fortune is shown to have *outdone fortuna Caesaris*' historically-attested limits, implying that fortune had favoured that protagonist even more perfectly than it had favoured Caesar. The implied logic of those set-pieces is that, at least for some time, the protagonist had benefitted from *every* turn of fortune around them. In other words, that any contingency they encountered would not adversely affect their pursuit of ends. Logically, then, if it lasted, such perfect fortune would vouchsafe the attainment of any end they pursued. These might sound uncharacteristically bold theoretical claims given the attested conservatism of the historians' intellectual milieux. Yet, to imply that individuals could wield power of that magnitude was to underline the potential consequences of two of the historians' chief purposes: their forensic purpose - to determine God's paradigm of perfect objective justice - and their deliberative purpose – to encourage individuals and, by extension, their leaders, to conduct themselves justly. Against the backdrop of those two purposes, the historians' identification of an individual leader who could fulfil ends totally unimpeded by contingency is a tantalising prospect. The historians of the twelfth century had a millennium of historical testimony that revealed *how* and *how not* to lead according to God's manifest divine justice, and the prospect of recurring New Caesars who might be able to follow their advice without the slightest let or hindrance.

To take an overview of the argument: at various times through history, God had empowered certain leaders to effect momentous change. It had been God's design, manifest through human ignorance, that the full potential of these opportunities had not yet been realised. Given that claims like these would have challenged assumptions regarding the limits of human power, their discussion calls for terminological differentiation. It seems appropriate to refer to the

[1] *DCP*, IV.7, 378-9 [Proelium cum omni fortuna animis acre conseritis, ne uos aut tristis opprimat aut iucunda corrumpat. Firmis medium viribus occupate] . Here I have preferred the translation of P.G. Walsh: Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, trans. P. G. Walsh, *The Consolation of Phislophy* (Oxford, 2000), 95.

state in which cosmic forces bend to one's will as 'cosmic agency', or, hereafter also referred to as 'agency'. In the following discussion, cosmic agency shall signify a state of transcendence of all detrimental contingency, and the theoretical capability to attain any desired end. I shall reserve the term 'secular power' to describe the attribution of power up to the limits that might conventionally have been expected of human activity in the world, i.e. power that was limited by natural or other contingent forces. It is also important to note that the historians, like Lucan, did not imply that cosmic agency guaranteed a protagonist could attain any end *instantaneously*. Rather, it suggested that the process of attaining a desired end would not be impeded by contingency while agency lasted. As Caesar's own example had proven, desired ends usually took time to attain, and fortune's favour could wane before they were attained.

As is apparent from the way the historians portrayed William Rufus, their views concerning the ends towards which their communities ought to strive often differed from those held by their secular leaders. The historians, though, could hold fast in the confidence that their views were founded on the evidence of centuries of God's manifest judgements. This facilitated their censure of those who sinned and so fell short of their duties as Christians and/or Christian leaders. Several of the New Caesars of the past were painted as having pursued ends that were contrary to what had been hoped of them, namely the unification of their community in service of the highest ends. This chapter is concerned to show how the New Caesar characterisation was used to convey censure for that failure, and censure for the alternative courses that those leaders chose instead. My argument is that once the logic of agency had been established, and especially in light of the insights of the model of fortune, fears arose concerning the acute threat to order and the communal good that New Caesars might pose in the future. I shall suggest that this might have given rise to an embryonic 'Satanic Caesar' type, whose actions were depicted as having been analogous to the activity of Satan and his demons or to the advent of the Antichrist. I also argue that some of these attributions might have been more literal than metaphorical.

Even in Caesar's own lifetime, commentators showed an interest in defining the ethical and cosmic consequences of his personage and actions. Cicero, in *De officiis*, wondered whether Caesar could have derived any true benefit from his victory in the Great Roman Civil War.[2] He argued that Caesar's seizure of the highest apparent expediency (*utile*), namely the possession of the whole world, had deprived him of something greater still.[3] Caesar's contravention of objective moral truth, *honestum*, had warped his understanding of justice, and led him to trade the higher good (*bonum*) for the base (*turpe*).[4] Cicero's argument was coloured by his republicanism, as he firmly believed that the *patria* was the highest good and belonged to its people, and not to any one leader.[5] In this sense, Caesar's dissolution of the republic was irredeemable, irrespective of his subsequent achievements and magnanimous rapprochement. The very fact of his dictatorship had precluded his and his people's pursuit of good ends, and indeed the highest end – just and dutiful service to *patria*.[6] It was a dereliction of reason to have attacked the fatherland and taken possession of it, and so Cicero did not hesitate to liken Caesar to a beast, i.e. a creature that possessed no rational faculties.[7] All of this was to support the oft-made argument that Caesar was a tyrant, whose irrational power grab had deprived the Roman subjects of their liberty, but Cicero made that argument particularly acutely, in so far as it identified Caesar as a murderer of the highest end itself, the *patria* (*parricidium patriae*).[8] Caesar's legacy replaced veneration of the fatherland with veneration of the imperial cult, with himself and his progeny at its centre.[9]

The dark absolutism of Cicero's arguments is also apparent in subsequent traditions. The Christians of later centuries explained the devil's belligerence towards God in similar terms – that he had placed his own happiness above the truth, and had 'sought to obliterate the whole church'.[10] The analogousness of Caesar and Satan was eventually recognised and, by no later than the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, protagonists came to be characterised as Satanic Caesars and even Caesarean Satans - types that feature prominently in the Early Modern literary canon.[11] Many works of that period are clearly indebted to a synthesis of religious imagery and Lucan's depiction of Caesar.[12] William Blissett examined the utility and meaning of these devices in two aging but

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[2] Cicero, *De officiis*, 354-7.
[3] Cicero, *De officiis*, 356-7.
[4] Cicero, *De officiis*, 354-7. See also: W. Blissett, 'Caesar and Satan', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 18 (1957), 221-32, at 221. See also discussions of Cicero's theory of *utile et honestum* at: Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, 21-41. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 230-40.
[5] Cicero, *De officiis*, 356-7.
[6] Cicero, *De officiis*, 356-7.
[7] Cicero, *De officiis*, 354-7.
[8] Cicero, *De officiis*, 356-7
[9] Weinstock, *Divus Julius*, especially 80-132.
[10] P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, new edn. (Berkeley and Los Angeles CA, 2000), 398.
[11] See: W. Blissett, 'Lucan's Caesar and the Elizabethan villain', *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956), 553-75. W. Blissett, 'Caesar and Satan', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 18 (1957), 221-32.
[12] Blissett, 'Lucan's Caesar and the Elizabethan villain', 553-75.

informative articles. It is the second of his articles, titled 'Caesar and Satan', that is of most interest for the present purposes. It surveys a range of notably Caesarean depictions of historical and literary protagonists, and proceeds to examine, 'the degree to which the same figure may be accounted Satanic'.[13] Blissett highlighted the Jacobean tragedian George Chapman's explicit comparison of the Great Roman Civil War to the civil war of heaven, and noted the plethora of evidence connecting Milton's Satan to Lucan's Caesar.[14] Blissett made a strong case for the prominence of the type in the literature of the period but offered little sense of whether the Satanic Caesar was, to any of the authors, a fully worked-through theoretical concept. Nevertheless, for the present purposes Blissett's work provides a *terminus ante quem* for the emergence of the type in literature. The question that remains is whether the twelfth-century historians might also have recognised and deployed these types, or at any rate mobilised the ideas upon which they rested, in their own works, centuries prior? If so, did they consider the association shallow and anecdotal, or might it have been of some moment when considered in light of the model of fortune's operation?

It has long been recognised that the origins and theoretical hinterlands of the dark Caesar tradition were cemented in the most influential ancient portrayal. As we have seen, it was *Pharsalia* that espoused the darkest Caesarean portraiture and set the precedent that Caesar's course had effected cosmic change. Arguably, three particular aspects of Lucan's portrayal of Caesar resonated so strongly with Christian thought about the devil and Antichrist that some of the historians alluded to them in order to convey especially forceful censure of certain New Caesars, and also to articulate truths about the workings of fortune and Providence more generally. What follows examines the evidence for that hypothesis, and seeks to identify the theory with which it might have engaged.

[13] Blissett, 'Caesar and Satan', 225.
[14] Blissett, 'Caesar and Satan', 221-32.

*Caesar as the lightning, bringer of thunder*

*Pharsalia*'s proemium elaborates on an image popularised by Virgil's *Eclogues* – the woe foretold when oak trees are struck by lightning - personifying the oak tree and lightning, the destroyed and the destroyer, as Pompey and Caesar, respectively.[15] Pompey is likened to a beleaguered oak tree whose grandeur has left it precarious and vulnerable to the weather, while Caesar is compared to the most destructive and unstoppable of natural forces:

> Even so the lightning is driven forth by wind through the clouds: with noise of the smitten heaven and crashing of the firmament it flashes out and cracks the daylight sky, striking fear and terror into mankind and dazzling the eye with slanting flame; it rages against its own temples, but both falling and returning it spreads destruction far and wide and gathers again its scattered fires.[16]

Caesar's association with lightning is a fundamental and recurring theme in *Pharsalia*, as in Roman literature more widely, and its importance to interpretation of the poem and prominence in Roman literary culture has ensured that it has attracted several dedicated studies in recent years.[17] In Lucan's rendering, the original source of the lightning's force remained quite literally shrouded in obscurity.[18] Of lightning's efficacy, though, nothing remained uncertain - it terrorised mankind, wrought destruction wherever it spread, derived strength from those fires it had caused, and rended the very firmament. It was, like Caesar, unstoppable.[19] Aside from its obvious forcefulness, there is cause to wonder whether a medieval audience might perhaps have interpreted Satanic connotations in this passage. In a 2008 article, 'Caesar as Jupiter in Lucan's Bellum Ciuile', Sarah A. Nix explicates the resonance of the statement that the lightning raged against its own temples.[20] Lucan's Caesar first prayed to Jupiter, before wielding the cosmic power that his (His) permissive favour had afforded him to plunder the Temple of Saturn at the foot of the Capitoline, atop which the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus stood. Lucan relays that the Tarpeian Rock, the Capitoline's southern summit, echoed as the doors of the Temple of Saturn were forced open.[21] The poem had earlier identified the rock as Jupiter's seat and the vantage from which he watched out over Rome.[22] Lucan's Caesar appeared to have assumed quasi-Jovian power, and with it he raged against Jupiter

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[15] For the Virgilian precedent, see the discussion of John of Salisbury's passages below.
[16] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 14-15 [Qualiter expressum uentis per nubila fulmen | Aetheris inpulsi sonitu mundique fragore | Emicuit rupitque diem populosque pauentes | Terruit obliqua praestringens lumina flamma; | In sua templa furit, nullaque exire uetante | Materia magnamque cadens magnamque reuertens | Dat stragem late sparsosque recolligit ignes].
[17] For instance: P. Roche, *Lucan: De Bello Ciuili: Book I* (Oxford, 2009), especially 104, 112, 194. S. A. Nix, 'Caesar as Jupiter in Lucan's *Bellum ciuille*', *The Classical Journal* 103 (2008), 281-94. C. Walde, 'Caesar, Lucan's *Bellum ciuile*, and their Reception', in M. Wyke (ed.) *Julius Caesar in Western Culture* (Oxford, 2006), 45-61, especially 51-2.
[18] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13.
[19] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13.
[20] Nix, 'Caesar as Jupiter', 281-94.
[21] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 124-5. See: Nix, 292.
[22] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 120-21 [namque ignibus atris | creditur, ut captae, rapturus moenia Romae | sparsurusque deos]. See: Nix, 288.

and all his attendant gods: 'For men believed that, as if he had taken Rome, he would destroy the walls with smoky fires and scatter her gods'.[23] Just as the sea crossing passage later in *Pharsalia* sees Caesar betray his ambition to be crowned king of Rome, here Lucan emphasises the general's ambition to supplant and personally replace Jupiter as king of the gods. This broader authorial conceit was signalled clearly to students in medieval scholia on Lucan's text dating back as far as the tenth century:[24]

> 1.155 IT RAGES AGAINST ITS OWN TEMPLES It rages within places that sacrifices are made. Amongst them the Capitoline. And thus Caesar raged within their [the Romans'] city as that temple [Jupiter Capitolinus] was among its temples.[25]

Given the prominence of the theme of Caesar as the lightning and the concomitant insinuation that Caesar turned Jovian power back on Jupiter, these could scarcely have escaped the notice of any who knew *Pharsalia* well enough to have alluded to it, quoted it, and referred to it to it as extensively as did the major twelfth-century historians of England. Jupiter afforded Caesar the leave and agency to rage against the pantheon just as God allowed Satan the means to rage against Him. These associations would also have linked Caesar, and the efficient cause of his power, with the airy regions that Patristic thought held were inhabited by demons.[26] Christian interpretation of the simile might further have been conditioned by familiarity with Luke 10:18: 'I saw Satan (*Satanam*) like lightning falling from heaven'.[27]

Undoubtedly, besides Luke 10:18, several other biblical passages portray lightning as an instrument of righteous divine justice, absent of any execrable connection. However, when John of Salisbury discussed the higher meaning of lightning in his *Policraticus*, he advised that harmful lighting, especially forked lightning, usually connoted something sinister:[28]

> If they produce any harm whatsoever due to the bolt, they are of ill omen, hence the lines:
>
> As I recall, the oaks oft struck by bolts
> Foretold this woe for me, had not my mind
> Been clouded.[29]

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[23] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 120-21. See: Nix, 291.
[24] Recorded in the *Commenta Bernensia*. See: Marti, 245.
[25] Usener, 21. [(I.155 IN SUA TEMPLA FURIT) In locis quae facit sacra dum furit. Uel in Capitolio. Sic autem caesar in sua urbe furit ut illud in suis templis].
[26] *DCD*, 318-21. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 341-4.
[27] Luke 10:18 [uidebam Satanan sicut fulgur de caelo cadentem].
[28] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trans. J. B. Pike, *The Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers* (London, 1938), 51-2. Emphasis my own. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. C. C. J. Webb (Oxford, 1909), 62 [Si enim afferant quamcumque fulminis lesionem, infausta sunt. Vnde illud:

Saepe malum hoc nobis (si mens non leua fuisset) | de celo tactas memini praedicere quercus. |

In his autem et illud perpenditur, an semita una descenderit, an multipharia aeris ruptione diffusos sparserit ignes. Hoc equidm semper tristius est. Dum Gaius Cesar ciuili bello patriae immineret, quam fulminosus aer extiterit, quod habuerit igneos turbines, quot trabes emiserit, nec ueteres historiae sufficiunt enarrare; et tunc

ignota obscurae uiderunt sidera noctes |].
[29] John is quoting from Virgil's *Eclogues*. See: Virgil, *Eclogues,* ed. and trans. H. R. Fairclough, rev. G. P. Goold, *Eclogues; Georgics; Aeneid 1-6* (Cambridge MA, 1999), 24-5.

> (52) This too must be considered, whether the bolt descend in one path or scatter its flames all through the riven air; the latter is always somewhat sinister. Ancient history is unequal to the task of narrating how full of flashes the air was, how many whirling clouds of fire therein, how many hurtling bolts, *at the time that Gaius Caesar was menacing his native land with civil war*; at that time
>
> Dark night saw stars it knew nought of.[30]

It could not have been lost on John that Virgil's first eclogue, his first quote above, had inspired Lucan's suggestion that Caesar, the metaphorical lightning, had felled the rotten oak, Pompey Magnus.[31] It implied that the past warned of the woe that Caesar brought upon those he touched. John's subsequent tricolon on the fulminations of Caesar's civil war is even more overt that lightning could and did bear Caesarean connotations during the twelfth century.

Of the historians, both William of Malmesbury and the author of the *Gesta Stephani* mentioned electrical storms when narrating the deeds of New Caesars. William of Malmesbury wrote that 'when William [Rufus] came home [from the continent], *thunder rolled again*, and a new storm of hatred blew up'.[32] This leaves no ambiguity that, for William, the storm and attendant thunder brought by a New Caesar stood for vice and, by extension, sin. Only a couple of clauses later, the passage goes on to describe Rufus' extraordinarily constant *fortuna*.[33] As we have seen, for William of Malmesbury, Rufus was the archetypical New Caesar. The author of the *Gesta Stephani* seems to have been less interested in defining protagonists according to any one type. Rather, he cast various leaders in the Caesarean mould at various points, as the unrest of King Stephen's reign left the balance of power teetering. On at least four separate occasions, he wrote that groups who had grown afraid of their ascendant enemies had cowered as if beneath an awful thunderclap.[34] The first instance of the figure relates the terror felt by the king's adherents upon learning that their monarch's most efficacious enemy, Robert of Gloucester, and 'his sister the Countess of Anjou', had landed at Arundel Castle:[35]

> England at once was shaken and quivered with intense fear, affected in different ways, because all who secretly or openly favoured the earl were keener than usual and more eager to trouble the king, while those who obeyed the king where brought low as though cowering beneath a dreadful thunderclap.[36]

The first clause of the above quote alludes both to a biblical passage, to be discussed below, and to *Pharsalia* I.303-5, where Caesar tells his men that their rebellion had shaken Rome unlike anything since Hannibal's invasion.[37] Like Lucan's Caesar, Robert's advent is signalled by his crossing of a

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[30] John is quoting from Lucan's *Pharsalia*. See: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 40-41.
[31] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13 [stat magni nominis umbra].
[32] *GP*, 142-3 [Willelmo reuerso, rursus tempestas intonuit, rursus procella odiorum inhorruit].
[33] *GP*, 142-3.
[34] *GS*, 86-7; 162-3; 204-5; 230-31.
[35] *GS*, 86-7 [sorore sua comitissa Andegauensi].
[36] *GS*, 86-7 [Concussa protinus Anglia et eximio pauore tremefacta, modis diuersis agitabatur; quia quicumque clanculo uel aperte illi fauebant, solito erant acriores et ad regem perturbandum accensiores; qui uero regi obtemperabant, quasi horrendo depressi tonitruo, humiliabantur].
[37] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 24-5.

body of water, in this case the English Channel rather than the Rubicon, while the mention of the thunderclap affirms the characterisation. Robert, as a New Caesar, acts with tectonic force, i.e. with agency that not even nature can resist. The metaphorical lightning bolts that issue from his arrival signal a widespread proliferation of reverses, all of which effect *in his favour*, just as they had for Caesar. Further implicit is that the New Caesar brings contingency down upon his adversaries with a force that issues from the occluded airy regions, beneath which all who do not side with him can only cower in fear. Although no Satanic connection is explicit, it seems plausible that there was an insinuation.

The power and agency of another Dark Caesar is exposited later in the *Gesta Stephani*. Geoffrey de Mandeville is introduced as having been the richest of England's magnates, admirable for his ability and general shrewdness.[38] Yet, the author also accuses him of having appropriated royal prerogatives, and having set himself above the king in governance of the realm: '... everywhere in the kingdom he took the king's place and in all transactions was listened to more eagerly than the king and received more obedience when he gave orders'.[39] He is further accused of having been in league with the Angevins. By his conduct, Geoffrey challenged the natural order, the king's supremacy, in a fashion that echoed Satan's defiance of God and, after a reprieve, raged even more violently against the proper order of things. Before an opportunity had arisen to openly challenge Geoffrey's injustices, The king managed to capture him during a baronial dispute that he had been brought in to arbitrate. However, Stephen made the misstep of releasing Geoffrey, who had already shown him contempt, upon receiving assurances that the Tower of London and other castles would be returned to the crown.[40] A powerful passage follows, that relates Geoffrey's subsequent rage against king and God.

> For, savage and turbulent as he was, through the disorders due to his tyranny he set the whole kingdom of England more at variance, as the king's enemies, hearing he had taken up arms against the king, rushed more readily and more joyously, now that they were strengthened by the aid of so powerful an earl, to stir up strife everywhere, and those who were reckoned supporters of the king, *as though cowering beneath a dreadful thunderclap*, were more and more *cast down* because he had left the king. [83] Geoffrey then, ..., raged everywhere with fire and sword; he devoted himself with insatiable greed to the plundering of flocks and herds; everything belonging to adherents of the king's party he took away and used up, stripped and destroyed; he spared no age and no occupation but, fevered with a thirst for brutality that could not be slaked, everywhere he very promptly brought to fulfilment against his enemies any act of refined cruelty that occurred to his mind.[41]

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[38] *GS*, 160-1.
[39] *GS*, 160-63 [... ubique per regnum regis uices adimplens et in rebus agendis rege auidius exaudiretur, et in praeceptis iniungendis plus ei quam regi obtemperaretur].
[40] *GS*, 162-3.
[41] *GS*, 162-5 [Ferus namque et turbulentus, per tyrannidis suae commotionem totum Angliae regnum in dissensionem ualidius commouit, dum et regis aduersarii, audientes eum in regem arma sumpsisse, tanti comitis roborati suffragio, promptius et hilarius ad discordiam ubique ingerendam conuolarent, et qui regis fautores esse uidebantur, tanquam horrendo depressi tonituro, pro illius a rege discessione magis ac magis humiliabantur. Galfridus igitur, ..., ignibus et gladio ubique locorum desaeuire; gregum et armentorum depraedationi auidus et insatiabilis incumbere; omnia aduersus regiae partis consentaneos abripere et

Again, the thunderstorm connotes reverses that cast down the king's supporters and elevated those who rallied behind Geoffrey. The magnate's brutal and cruel means are related as ends in their own right, as if he would have regarded to regain his exalted station in any other fashion as unsatisfactory. This reinforces the allusion to the darker aspects of Lucan's Caesar, specifically, this time, *Pharsalia* I.145, which reads that Caesar's 'one disgrace was to conquer without war'.[42] Geoffrey's depredations, like Satan's, are shown to have targeted God at least as much as any plausible secular enemies.

> [he] smashed open the churches [of Cambridge] by burying axes in the doors, and after plundering their ornaments, and the wealth that the townsmen had laid up in them, set fire to them everywhere. He raged with equal savagery against the whole surrounding district, showing no mercy, and in every church that came in his way; the possessions of the monasteries he reduced to a desert by taking the chattels and ravaging everything; their shrines, or anything deposited for safety in their treasuries, without fear or compassion he savagely carried off; and he not only pillaged the monastery of St. Benedict of Ramsey, taking the monks' valuables and even stripping the altars and the relics of the saints, but actually drove the monks out of he monastery without pity, put in a garrison and turned it into a castle for himself.[43]

In having sacked a monastery and fortifying it into a castle, Geoffrey had seized for himself those things owed to God. This closes the Caesarean analogy with an implicit contravention of the ubiquitous Matthew 22:21, the instruction to 'render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's'.[44] The author tells us that Geoffrey eventually brought about his own demise, as he kept stirring up trouble 'with too much boldness and too much confidence in his own judgement'.[45] *Pharsalia* I.145 was mentioned above, and in the next line, I.146, Lucan had remarked on Caesar's headstrongness.[46] There is ample evidence of it having been the authorial intention to establish the Caesarean analogy, and it is Caesar's especial egocentricity that is emphasised to the extent that it seems plausible to have expected audiences to draw the Satanic connection. Geoffrey had raged against those of God, and through his actions had directly challenged God himself.

The image of the terrible electrical storm was employed with reference to one more protagonist – Duke Henry of Anjou, the future King Henry II. The *Gesta* states that both of the duke's invasions had prompted the king's supporters to cower as if 'beneath a dreadful

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consumere, nudare et destruere; nulli aetati, nulli professioni parcere, sed insatiatae atrocitatis sitim ubique exaestuans, quicquid exquisitae crudelitatis menti occurrebat, intantissime in aduersarios complere].

[42] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13 [solusque pudor non uincere bello].

[43] *GS*, 164-5 [ecclesiasque, ostiis securibus immersis, uiolenter confregit, distractisque spoliis, et quas ciues in eis recondiderant opes, flammas passim iniecit, talique ferocitate in omnem circumquaque prouinciam, in omnibus etiam, quascumque obuiam habebat, ecclesiis, immiseranter desaeuiit; possessiones coenobiorum, distractis rebus, depopulatis omnibus, in solitudinem redegit; sanctuaria eorum, uel quaecumque in aerariis concredita reponebantur, sine metu uel pietate ferox abrepsit; coenobiumque sancti Benedicti de Ramesia, non solum captis monachorum spoliis, altaribus quoque et sanctorum reliquiis nudatis, expilauit, sed etiam expulsis incompassiue monachis de monasterio, militibusque impositis, castellum sibi adaptauit].

[44] Matthew 22:21.

[45] *GS*, 166-7 [nimis audax, nimisque prudentiae suae innitens]. See also: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13 ff.

[46] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 12-13.

thunderclap'.[47] What is interesting about the portrayal of Duke Henry as a dark Caesar, though, is that during his first invasion, he proved unable to summon the Caesarean cosmic agency which his enemies seem to have expected, and feared so gravely. Rather, his mercenaries had proved slack and remiss in their pledged duties and, seeing this, few of the barons had dared to help him.[48] This failure contrasts with his second invasion, when he proved capable of invoking some of the agency that his enemies had feared. On the occasion of his second landing, the king's forces were again brought low as if beneath an awful thunderclap, and, once more, England was shaken. The second time, though, Henry brought with him 'men of the greatest cruelty', who proved able to effect his designs and, to paraphrase, complete his wonted fortune.[49] Satanic qualities are implied, in the first instance, by the description of the conduct of his men, who, upon entering the fortified town of Malmesbury, had 'burst into the church with them [the fleeing townspeople] and, after plundering and murdering monks and priests all over it, did not shrink from laying hands on the very altar'.[50] It might be tempting to dismiss such accusations as generic invective, but the handling of so markedly Caesarean figures' desecration of the altars is quite emphatic. Henry's forces' despoliations are additionally described as 'bestial', echoing, albeit in all probability unknowingly, Cicero's remarks on Caesar's abandonment of reason.[51] Arguably, the author also subverts the sea crossing of *Pharsalia* V, for after the duke discharges his men's service, and sends them back to Normandy, they are wrecked by a storm that rises suddenly upon a quiet sea.[52] It is tempting to interpret here that travelling without the cargo that might have 'insured [them] against the waves', their Caesar, many of them were drowned.[53] That would be to suggest that the dark Caesar had a further role to play in the providential plan, but those who had blindly followed him did not.

William of Malmesbury, meanwhile, mentions that during the reign of William Rufus, his archetypical dark New Caesar, several severe lightning storms wrought damage on Winchcombe Abbey and Salisbury Cathedral. Writing about how the former came to be damaged, William tells us that

> In the fourth year [of William Rufus' reign] there was violent lightning, and violent storms; for instance, on 15 October at Winchcombe a thunderbolt struck the side of the tower with such force that it broke down the masonry next to the roof, and a great hole opened, as large as a man. Through this it entered and struck a main beam, so that fragments were scattered all over the church, and it threw down the head of the Crucifix and its right leg, and also an image of the Blessed Virgin. Then followed a stench more frightful than the men's sense of smell will tolerate. At length the monks

[47] *GS*, 204-5 [quasi graui tonitruo]. See also: *GS*, 230-1, 'as if cowering beneath an awful thunderclap' [quasi horrendo tonitruo conterriti deprimebantur].
[48] *GS*, 204-7.
[49] *GS*, 230-31 [uiris ... summae crudelitatis].
[50] *GS*, 230-31 [se pariter cum illis in ecclesiam uiolenter intruserunt, peractisque passim in ea rapinis et caedibus in monachos et sacerdotes, sed et in ipsum altare manus inicere non timuerunt].
[51] See: Cicero, *De officiis*, 354-7.
[52] *GS*, 232-3.
[53] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 282-3 [A fluctu defendet onus]. My translation renders 'defendet' in the imperfect tense for reasons of grammatical consistency.

> with successful courage rushed in, and by sprinkling holy water put to flight the wiles of the Enemy.[54]

The second year of Rufus' reign had witnessed a huge earthquake, and a delay to the usual ripening of crops. William recounted all of these events scarcely a paragraph after having conjured the image of the soul of Julius Caesar having passed into King William.[55]

The extension of Caesarean allusion beyond the introductory lightning simile all-but confirms that the historians, too, like John of Salisbury, reckoned that it could and often did connote Caesar and the cosmic agency that a Caesar wielded. Lightning, according to Christian precedent, could symbolise the fall of Satan from heaven. It was thought that its power emanated out of the airy regions in which demons dwelt. It wrought destruction and terror on mankind, and, according to ancient theory, drew its force afresh from the devastation it had caused.[56] Arguably, the historians' cognisance of lightning's biblically-attested and theoretical Satanic connotations is plausible, given the manifest wickedness of those New Caesars who were introduced as figurative lightning storms. The theoretical basis for association of lightning, Caesar, and Satan as it related to understanding of the model of fortune's operation will be explored later in this chapter. First, it is necessary to examine further bases for supposing that certain New Caesar portraits hinted at the mobilisation of Satanic forces.

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[54] *GR*, 568-9 [Quarto anno tumultus fulgurum, motus turbinum; denique idus Octobris apud Wincelcumbam ictus de caelo emissus latus turris impulit tanta ui ut debilitata maceria in confinio tecti ingens foramen ad modum humanae grossitudinis aperiretur. Ibi ingressus trabem maximam perculit, ut fragmina in tota sspargerentur aecclesia, quin et crucifixi caput cum dextra tibia et imaginem sanctae Mariae deiecit. Secutus est odor teterrimus, hominum importabilis naribus. Tandem monachi felici ausu irrumpentes benedictae aquae aspergine prestigias Inimici effugarunt].
[55] *GR*, 566-7.
[56] See: Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 14-15 (I.157).

The *Gesta Stephani*'s portrayal of the Angevin invasions supplies another reason for supposing that its author wished to impute Satanic characteristics to the portrayal of their leaders. Deeper intertextual resonances lurk behind the statement that England had been left shaken by the advent of invading forces. This phrase described the arrival of Robert of Gloucester, and introduced both of Duke Henry's invasions. As mentioned above, this might have alluded to the claim of Lucan's Caesar that his forces were shaking Rome as Hannibal had done before them.[57] However, to a biblically-attuned audience it might also have invoked the castigation of a figurative Lucifer in Isaiah 14:16.[58]

> How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning? How art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations? And thou saidst in thy heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit. They that shall see thee, shall turn toward thee, and behold thee. Is this the man that troubled the earth, *that shook kingdoms*, that made the world a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the prison to his prisoners?[59]

In its original context the name Lucifer stands for the Babylonian Emperor, whose erection of the tower of Babel and other actions had repeatedly offended God. Thereafter, God had permitted the destruction of their civilization along with the Assyrian and Moabite kingdoms. The content of the passage intuitively aligns with the story of Satan's fall. That similarity was not lost on Augustine, who, when refuting the Manichean position that the Devil was a sinner by nature, asked,

> what are they [the Manicheans] to make of the witness of the prophets; either what Isaiah says when he denotes the Devil (*diabolum*) in the figurative person of the Baylonian emperor, 'What a fall that was, when Lucifer (*Lucifer*) fell, who rose in the early morning!'[60]

For Augustine, Lucifer also exemplified the idea that shocking and unforeseen occurrences could disrupt the regular course of events, and shift (from a human perspective) the natural paradigm. Augustine argued that changes in the properties of things, even those things that humans professed to understand, were effected according to the omnipotence of God, and so were never contrary to

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[57] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 24-5.
[58] The allusion to Isaiah was noted by the editors of the OMT edition: *GS*, 205, n. 4.
[59] Isaiah, 14:12-17 [quomodo cecidisti de caelo lucifer qui mane oriebaris corruisti in terram qui uulnerabas gentes. Qui dicebas in corde tuo in caelum conscendam super astra Dei exaltabo solium meum sedebo in monte testamenti in lateribus aquilonis. ascendam super altitudinem nubium ero similis Altissimo. Verumtamen ad infernum detraheris in profundum laci. qui te uiderint ad te inclinabuntur teque prospicient numquid iste est uir qui conturbauit terram qui concussit regna, qui posuit orbem desertum et urbes eius destruxit uinctis eius non aperuit carcerem]. Emphasis my own.
[60] *DCD*, 446-7. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 1, 482-3 [quid respondetur propheticis testimoniis, siue quod ait Esaias sub figurata persona principis Babyloniae diabolum notans: Quo modo cecidit Lucifer, qui mane oriebatur].

nature. To this end, he invoked an anomalous celestial observation that he had found remarked in a work of Marcus Varro to take aim at astrologers' confidence that they could predict the courses of stars.[61] Varro had, for his part, referenced an account of the first-century-BC chronicler Castor, which described a sudden change in shape, colour, size, and course of Venus.[62] In his discussion, Augustine dispensed with the name Venus and referred to the celestial object as Lucifer: '... they have been bold enough to assert that what happened then to Lucifer (*lucifero*) never happened before and has never happened afterwards.'; '... the behaviour of Lucifer (*lucifero*) as recorded by Varro'.[63] The regular natural order was subject to distortion by forces outside of the immediate comprehension of mankind, but permitted by God for some reason that might itself be unknown.

Given what the above reveals of Lucifer's signification in formative Christian thought, the *Gesta*'s invocations appear to have strengthened the implication that the Angevins wielded cosmic agency in a decidedly Satanic manner. It is compelling that allusion to Lucifer additionally strengthened the Caesarean association: in *Pharsalia* I, as Caesar crossed the Rubicon, he bound himself in allegiance to the source of his agency, *fortuna*. As he initiated the Great Roman Civil War, the morning star, Lucifer, fell from sight.

> When Caesar had crossed the stream [the Rubicon] and reached the Italian bank on the further side, he halted on the forbidden territory: "Here," he cried, "here I leave peace behind me and legality which has been scorned already; henceforth I follow Fortune (*fortuna*). ... Ariminum was the nearest town, and he brought terror there, when the stars were fleeing from the sunlight and the morning star (*lucifero*) alone was left. So the day dawned that was to witness the first turmoil of the war...[64]

[61] *DCD*, 980-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 504-6.
[62] *DCD*, 980-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 504-6.
[63] *DCD*, 980-81. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 504-6 [sunt dicere hoc quod de Lucifero contigit nec antea nec postea contigisse] [Quod uero de Lucifero Varro scripsit].
[64] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 18-21 [Caesar, ut aduersam superato gurgite ripam | Attigit, Hesperiae uetitis et constitit aruis, | "Hic," ait, "hic pacem temerataque iura relinquo; | Te, Fortuna, sequor"] [ Vicinumque minax inuadit Ariminum, et ignes | Solis lucifero fugiebant astra relicto].

There are many and varied twelfth-century tales of demonic possession and moreover, according to Patristic thought, the day would come when Satan himself would possess the person of a human being and, for a time, rage with untold fury against God and the Church.[65] The extent of twelfth-century English interest in the impending advent of Antichrist are attested by the volume of contemporary manuscripts of Abbot Adso of Montier-en-Der's highly influential *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*.[66] 8 manuscripts from c12, two more from late c12 or early c13.[67] The work was popular on the continent and moreover, at least three of the manuscripts dating from c11-c13 are thought to have belonged to English communities.[68] Adso's work compiled much of the otherwise-disparate exegetical work on the Antichrist into an accessible and compact tract that read as a *uita*.[69] Adso urges his reader that he ought to first know that the Antichrist is so-called because his acts are contrary to Christ and the acts of Christ.[70] Where Christ had come in humility, the Antichrist would be outwardly proud, and so on.[71] He tells that there are many antichrists in the present time – those who speak and act contrary to Christ. He also claims that his advent will revive the worship of demons. This recalls Augustine's argument that the Romans had worshipped demons who they had mistaken for gods.[72] He later mentions that the Antichrist will be raised up in his pride 'above everything that is called God/a god, that is above all the pagan gods: Hercules, Apollo, Jupiter, Mercury, who they think are gods'.[73] The evocation of Rome is furthered as Adso mentions that Nero and Domitian had been his agents.[74] Having described how Satan will cause a human woman to birth his child, he explains that the child will purport to be the son of God, and shall have an unnatural command over nature and cosmic forces.[75] Adso relays that the Antichrist's emergence may coincide with an event that some will interpret as a true demise of the Roman Empire.[76] He also tells of two prophets who will be on hand to defend the faithful and teach them how Antichrist's assault on the church may be resisted.[77] Although Antichrist shall overcome these

[65] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem*, trans. G. L. Archer, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, reprinted edn. (Eugene OR, 2009), 77. *DCD*, 930-35; 944-7. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 446-52; 463-6.
[66] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, ed. D. Verhelst, *De ortu et tempore Antitchristi necnon et tractatus qui ab eo dependunt* (Turnhout, 1976).
[67] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 8-18.
[68] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 8-18.
[69] R. K. Emmerson, 'Antichrist as Anti-Saint: The Significance of Abbot Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo*', *American Benedictine Review* 30 (1970), 175-90.
[70] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 22
[71] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 22
[72] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 22. Augustine develops this argument through Book II of *DCD*. See, especially: *DCD* 86-88.
[73] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 27 [supra omne quod dicitur deus, id est supra omnes deos gentium, Herculem uidelicet, Apollinem, Iouem, Mercurium, quos pagani deos esse estimant].
[74] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 22.
[75] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 23.
[76] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 25-9.
[77] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 25-9.

efforts, he shall at last be vanquished as God's judgement falls upon him in a manner that cannot yet be foreseen.[78]

Adso does not mention Julius Caesar in his treatise but other prominent exegetical work charged the Roman dictator with instigating the circumstances that would climax with Antichrist's emergence. This material was demonstrably known by at least one of our four historians. The basis for this understanding was the prophecy of Daniel 7. Therein, Daniel had prophesied the emergence of four great beasts, each possessing of different characteristics. It was revealed to Daniel that each of the four beasts symbolised a different kingdom, and that the fourth kingdom would be more powerful than the others.

> The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be greater than all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.[79]

Later, the four beasts of Daniel 7 were interpreted as symbolising the four great empires of mankind: the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Greek/Macedonian, and the Roman.[80] The strength of Rome was understood to have outmatched that of any earlier empire.[81] It was oft-repeated during the Middle Ages, including by the post-conquest historians, that Julius Caesar had conquered the whole world.[82] Henry of Huntingdon, for instance, wrote that Caesar had 'conquered everything'.[83] He also propagated the identification of the Roman empire as the fourth beast of Daniel's prophecy: 'Julius Caesar was the first of the Romans to gain sole rule of the empire. This is the fourth of the principal kingdoms that Daniel foresaw'.[84] Accordingly, Daniel foresaw that under Julius Caesar the earth was trodden down and broken into pieces, reminiscent of the cosmic rending that tradition imputed to the dark Caesar. The fourth beast of Daniel's prophecy was not itself the Antichrist, it was merely the vehicle by which the circumstances for the Antichrist's advent would be brought about. The Antichrist himself was represented, instead, as an eleventh and initially insignificant horn that would grow out of the beast, that would look upon the world through human eyes.

> ... it was unlike to the other beasts which I had seen before it, and had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold another little horn sprung out of the midst of them: and three of the first horns were plucked up at the presence thereof: and behold eyes like the eyes of a man were in this horn, and a mouth speaking great things.[85]

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[78] Adso of Montier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, 29-30.
[79] Daniel 7:23 [bestia quarta regnum quartum erit in terra quod maius erit omnibus regnis et deuorabit uniuersam terram et conculcabit et comminuet eam].
[80] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem*, 72-77. *HA*, 520-21; 524-5; 528-9.
[81] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem*, 77.
[82] For instance, see: Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, 10-11. *HA*, 36-7; 616-7.
[83] *HA*, 616-7, [omnia subiugasset].
[84] *HA*, 528-9 [Iulius Cesar primus Romanorum singulare optinuit imperium. Hoc est quartum regnorum principalium que Daniel preuiderat].
[85] Daniel 7:7-8 [dissimilis autem erat ceteris bestiis quas uideram ante eam et habebat cornua decem considerabam cornua et ecce cornu aliud paruulum ortum est de medio eorum et tria de cornibus primis euulsa sunt a facie eius et ecce oculi quasi oculi hominis erant in cornu isto et os loquen ingentia].

Jerome concurred with what he termed 'the traditional interpretation of the Catholic Church', which held that these details signified,

> ... that at the end of the world, when the Roman Empire is to be destroyed, there shall be ten kings who will partition the Roman world amongst themselves. Then an insignificant eleventh king will arise...[86]

What Jerome advised next is of import as we consider the full range of possible connotations that the characterisations and implications exposited in this chapter might have conveyed.

> Let us not follow the opinion of some commentators and suppose him to be either the Devil or some demon, but rather, one of the human race, in whom Satan will wholly take up his residence in bodily form.[87]

Jerome, then, had warned that the day would come when Satan would wholly take up residence in the person of a king, who would rule in the partitioned Roman Empire. Augustine, in his own discussion of the prophecy in *De ciuitate Dei*, told his readers to refer to the learned interpretation of Jerome.[88] On the question of when the Church might expect the Antichrist's advent, Augustine warned that it remained unpredictable.

> I confess, indeed, that I fear we may be mistaken in respect of the ten kings whom Antichrist, as it seems, is to find, who are ostensibly ten men; I am afraid, that is, that Antichrist may come unexpectedly, seeing that there are not as many kings as that in existence in the Roman world. *But it may be suggested that the number ten signifies the total number of kings after whom he is to come* ...[89]

The final clause of this quote is particularly relevant as it appears to question whether there might be some series of kings, connected in some way, whose reigns would precede the eleventh, the reign of the Antichrist. Augustine does not imply any necessity on this being a series of consecutive reigns.

It is tempting to wonder whether some, in interpreting the passages, might have been mindful of the identification of the Roman Empire as the kingdom of the Caesars. If so, Julius Caesar, as the figurative representation of the fourth kingdom, would have signified the fourth beast, while its horns might have symbolised New Caesars that would emerge and rejuvenate its power and destructive energy. Daniel 7's vision of the Antichrist certainly shared some striking resemblances to the antique depictions of the dark Caesar. We have already seen how Caesar was remembered for having turned quasi-Jovian power against Jupiter himself. As dictator, he had also announced major constitutional reforms of the Roman Republic, and signed the edict that

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[86] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem*, 77. Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem libri III*, ed. J-. P. Migne, *Commentariorum In Danielem Prophetam* (Turnhout, 1964), 531 [in consummatione mundi, quando regnum destruendum est Romanorum, decem futuros reges, qui orbem Romanum inter se diuidant, et undecimum surrecturum esse regem paruulum].
[87] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem*, 77; ed. Migne, 531 [Ne eum putemus iuxta quorumdam opinionem, uel diabolum esse, uel daemonem; sed unum de hominibus, in quo totus satanas habitaturus sit corporaliter].
[88] *DCD*, 945. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 465.
[89] *DCD*, 946. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 465 [Vereri me sane fateor ne in decem regibus, quos tamquam decem homines uidetur inuenturus Antichristus, forte fallamur, atque ita ille inopinatus adueniat, non existentibus tot regibus in orbe Romano. Quid si enim numero isto denario uniuersitas regum significata est post quos ille uenturus est]. Emphasis my own.

introduced the Julian Calendar in 45 BC. Daniel 7 relays that the Antichrist 'will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws'.[90] All of this strikes of William of Malmesbury's tales of William Rufus, who as we have seen used the quasi-divine agency (aka *fortuna Caesaris*) that God had granted him to defy nature, oppress the Archbishop of Canterbury, speak out against faith in God on various opportunities, levy 'an intolerable tax' on his subjects, and whose reign witnessed severe electrical storms, earthquakes, and a distortion of the times usually taken for crops to ripen.[91]

Some traditions explicitly associated Julius Caesar with the fourth beast. Almut Suerbaum has written of the German vernacular *Kaiserchronik's* unsurprising interest in Caesar as the first in a line of titular Caesars. The chronicle overtly associated Julius Caesar with the fourth beast, which its author identified as a wild boar, and mistakenly called the third (although still final) beast.[92]

> The third beast was a terrifying wild boar, who signifies the excellent Julius Caesar. That same wild boar had ten horns, with which it felled all its enemies. Julius Caesar conquered all countries; they all served under him. Thus the wild boar signifies to us that the Roman Empire shall always be free.[93]

The author of the *Kaiserchronik* dwelt upon the fearsome power of the beast as indicative of the Roman Empire's providentially-vouchsafed liberty, and was either unaware of, or was trying to ignore the climax of the prophecy, which held that out of that kingdom, and, according to Augustine, out of that line, Antichrist would emerge.[94] None of the post-conquest Latin histories are as explicit in confirming whether or not their authors connected the concept of the New Caesar with the eleven horns of Daniel's prophecy. However, a passage of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* does provide good implicit evidence. That will be revisited in Chapter Five. It is also worth mentioning one relevant episode found in the period's English vernacular histories. Given that the author of the *Kaiserchronik* identified the final beast of Daniel's prophecy as a wild boar that signified Julius Caesar, it might appear curious that Layamon, in his *Brut*, used the same simile: 'They saw how Julius Caesar fought as a wild boar'.[95] However, elsewhere in the *Brut* there are many other instances of protagonists being likened to wild boars on account of their energetic bellicosity.[96] Natural similes were characteristic of Anglo-Saxon and, later, Germanic and English vernacular literature, and so in the absence of any additional commentary in the *Brut*, it would be unwise to read it as a substantive allusion to the prophecy of Daniel.

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[90] Daniel 7:25 [sermones contra excelsum loquetur et sanctos Altissimi conteret et putabit quod possit mutare tempora et leges].
[91] *GR*, 562-71.
[92] Suerbaum, 'The Middle Ages', 323-4.
[93] Quoting the translation of: Suerbaum, 'The Middle Ages', 324.
[94] Suerbaum, 'The Middle Ages', 324.
[95] Layamon, *Brut*, ed. and trans. F. Madden, *Layamon's Brut: or Chronicle of Britain, a poetical semi-Saxon paraphrase of the Brut of Wace, now first published from the Cottonian manuscripts in the British Museum, accompanied by a literal translation, notes and a grammatical glossary*, 3 vols. (London, 1847), vol. 1, 320.
[96] Layamon, *Brut*, ed. and trans. Madden, vol. 1, 72; vol. 2, 250; 257; 469.

Of course, characterising someone as Satanic need not imply that they are actually Satan, and neither would any allusion to the interpretations of Daniel's prophecies outlined above, if one were to be found, need to be taken as a suggestion that the implicated New Caesar was thought to be the literal Antichrist. Any such insinuation would have functioned as a powerful political invective, but it was the precedent of the Caesarean connection that, if used against a New Caesar, would have lent additional force. The purpose of the above discussions are, first and foremost, to show the origins and range of the negative connotations that might have informed unfavourable opinions concerning New Caesars. Second, to show that there were several Christian and pagan precedents that may have supported an expectation that a Caesar or New Caesar's power extended beyond worldly, secular power in the conventional sense, and into the realm of cosmic agency. The saints were understood to be able to work miracles, but Caesar was one of few secular figures who wielded the agency to work the anti-miracle. He was an integral part of the manifest natural order, as exemplified by his associations with lightning and with Lucifer, but could also defy even the most assured human expectations of that order – in these cases God's moral governance of the world, and the regular motion of the stars. He achieved beyond reasonable expectation, but did so to advance his own ends, contra to justice, and seemingly to seize the divine prerogative for himself, as Satan had done. Worryingly, Jerome had established precedent for fearing that one day Satan would possess a human being, and manifest his wicked pursuit of advantage in the person of one of the kings of Caesar's empire. This is the suite of considerations that were available to authors and interpreters of Caesarean characterisations. The darkness of the historians' portraiture of kings and magnates such as William II Rufus and Geoffrey de Mandeville is at once clearly indebted to Lucan's portrayal of Caesar and to expectations surrounding the advent of antichrists and even *the* Antichrist – Satan's possession of an earthly king. Whether or not the expression of these anxieties can be said to have constituted a conscious, if embryonic, formulation of the Satanic Caesar type that assumed such prominence in later centuries, these characterisations do amply emphasise the damage that could be wrought by those who wielded Caesarean agency but directed it against God and His servants, rather than towards a *oneness* with Him and His.

*The Satanic Caesar and the model of fortuna's operation*

There existed a host of scriptural, literary, and ideological precedents that cast Caesar and New Caesars in a dangerous light. How, though, would these dangers have been rationalised according to the terms of the historians' model of fortune's operation? The previous chapter discussed the concept of *fortuna Caesaris*, the near-perfect or perfect preponderance of fortune's favours that attended the Caesar for some duration of time. Most major historians of the period attributed this trait to certain of the leaders they portrayed. This attribution insinuated the possession of unbounded agency that exceeded the conventional limits of human power. The question at hand here is how the historical evidence discussed above might have articulated the deployment of cosmic agency in the service of what were characterised as Satanic ends. Further, what the consequences of a Satanic Caesar's conduct may have been for others? As the only surviving evidence of this ideology is implicit and sub textual, it is unrealistic to hope for explicit textual corroboration of all assertions that must be made to reconstruct it. Instead, it is necessary to go beyond the text and proceed by joining the points of evidence that we do have.

The repositories of meaning discussed above were tapped by historians to issue associative invective against certain secular leaders. Arguably though, the true weight of these charges was borne by deeper ideological connotations. To understand how this might have been thought to operate, it is important to recall that a fundamental impetus to post-conquest historical output, and especially so during the first half of the twelfth century, was ethical reform – the facilitation of the more effective pursuit of various ends and, ultimately, the highest end, God. The historians' ambition prompted them to study the revealed manifestation of God's absolute justice – history – and more specifically, how past human conduct had seemed to correspond with patterns in the subsequent unfolding of events, governed as they were by God's Providence. Yet, it was one thing for historians to be able to uncover and convey the exemplary lessons that this provided, and another to think that the high standard of ethical conduct that their efforts identified could realistically be maintained. They realised that it was a near-impossible standard given that the enduring inconstancy of fortune supressed the individual's ability to judge the good in practical circumstances, and to act on any good that had been correctly discerned.

Those repositories of meaning that have been exposited in the sections above represented aspects of the inhibition of ethical reform and the maintenance of proper moral conduct. These might be understood as follows: Satan was amongst the most primary causes of an individual's temptation to sin, which propagated fortune.[97] Caesar, empowered by *fortuna Caesaris*, attained ends unhindered by contingency, but, like Satan, he had been corrupted by a thirst for still-greater cosmic agency. The greater a New Caesar's egocentrism, the greater their injustice and hence their

[97] But not *the* primary cause, which is always God.

sin, and so the more frequently and extensively that their conduct would engender fortune's reverses. As reverses multiplied, they struck more and more people down, while raising others up, all irrespective of their apparent proximate desserts. The breakdown of justice also stirred that moral turbidity which made the good still harder to discern, for bad people increasingly seemed to profit, while punishment befell those who had seemed good. The sense of individual helplessness in this circumstance, and the shock that the spread of reverses must have caused, could be represented by the image of forked lightning's increasingly proliferate strikes. Lucan and the historians alike implied that Caesar's conduct instigated the storm that brought lightning down from the demonic aether, crashing upon those whom he ruled. Beyond all of this, it is not a stretch to imagine such a scenario eliciting anxieties over the advent of Antichrist, and his prophesied depredations against the Church and its people.

It is important to recognise the depth of potential meaning that a protagonist's characterisation as a Satanic Caesar would have borne. The instillation of order and moral righteousness animated the whole historical project, and the Satanic Caesar was the single most feared mortal enemy of any such project. The ceiling of contingency had precluded the human ascent back to paradise in this life following original sin, but under a Satanic Caesar that ceiling was brought much lower - so low that people were locked beneath a suffocating cosmic and secular tyranny that kept good ends indistinguishable from the bad and precluded even those few good ends that could be recognised.

Yet, if the instillation of order was pleasing to God, why did God grant a Caesar the grace to rage against him? Why did God allow a Caesar to pervert people's pursuit of Him? As Chapter One reiterated, it was an unimpeachable tenet of God's perfection that fortune's reverses were just, even if they did not seem so from a human perspective. When one considers these ideas in light of the principle of *fortuna Caesaris*, an apparent paradox comes into relief: why would God allow a sinner, or one who assented to sin, to benefit from those actions, especially if the proximate advantage was vast in magnitude and recurrent? We have noted the belief that God used fortune's reverses as a prompt to turn sinners back to the good, and to discourage the good from turning away from Him. However, the problem that men such as Anselm was said to have encountered was that fortune, when it proliferated so rampantly, and when God's 'prompts' were continually ignored, scattered virtue and fuelled vice anew. How could God allow all of this to proceed when He had knowledge that the individual would *not* ultimately reform? To be sure, men like Caesar and Rufus had met discreditable ends without having heeded the providential lesson and turned towards the good. Yet, might the true significance of their fortune, and indeed their reigns, have been to serve as testament to the prospect for human redemption and restoration? Perhaps God, in granting their extreme and remarkable fortune, was transmitting a providential message to those who He knew would one day seek to discover it and rationalise its meaning. Manifest, then, was the divine will that not every leader would be subject to the constraints of fortune. For the

historian-ethicists who tell us that fortune's inconstancy was their greatest obstacle, God had left a hint that the challenge they faced might not be insurmountable.

# CHAPTER FIVE: PARADISE REGAINED

Post-lapsarian humanity existed at the mercy of fortune's play, as frequent contingencies precluded the attainment of good ends and often undid progress towards the human *telos*. The historians asserted that these threats were heightened when a New Caesar sinned, since the resultant proliferation of reverses disrupted each affected individual's exercise of prudence, threatened their supply of external goods, and so trapped them under a ceiling of contingency. It became difficult for anyone, under such circumstances, to identify good ends and virtuous courses, and even more difficult to attain and fulfil those. The model helped elucidate, in the language of ethics and providential physics, the effects of the dark Caesarism that had stirred Lucan's pen and that commentators recognised in the conduct of contemporary leaders. These efforts brought Lucanian imagery, various Christian traditions, and the example of flawed kings like William Rufus together. This prompted apparent typological experiments with a characterisation more commonly associated with later literature – the Satanic Caesar. While none of the twelfth-century historians described the type in overt form, each of its constituent elements were prominent enough in the cultural consciousness to have imbued allusory references to it with invective force. Yet, as this chapter shall show, the dark or Satanic Caesar was evidently not the *only* type of New Caesar that the historians wrote into their works. Some of their narratives relate New Caesars who had turned their cosmic agency towards the good. These men had taken steps to ensure that their own and their people's good actions would eventually be met with no contingency – they had instilled perfect order in their communities for some period of time. The historians' treatment of these efforts betrays aspects of the type's ideological underpinnings. This chapter discusses these episodes and considers the arguments that they seem to have been intended to convey. One of these narratives is worthy of extended consideration, for in it many of the strands of this study coalesce into an extended argument whose ambition resonates with especial profundity. A close analysis of these extraordinary passages, and consideration of the thought that substantiated them, might bring the true extent of the ethical historians' ambitions for this life into sharper focus.

*Extinguishing fortune*

Chapter One explicated the model of fortune's operation that is apparent in the histories, and Chapter Four showed how the model explained and would have strengthened the invective force behind charges of Satanic Caesarism. The model described a problem, and so presumably its highest possible utility would have been to help identify a solution to that problem. The problem, from an ethical and salvific point of view, was that fortune and its reverses obstructed the attainment of happiness in this life and impeded the path to salvation. Boethius' profession of fortune's goodness had referred to the role it could play in reminding humanity of the low worth of external goods relative to eternal goods. The historians' forensics made the same point, but articulated it through past examples rather than logical deduction. They had collated fortune's ethical lessons so that their audience might learn not to repeat past mistakes. But history also emphasised that fortune's play regularly precluded or undid efforts to live virtuously. Reverses kept humanity locked in an apparently inescapable cycle of sin, and ordinarily it might have seemed as though there was no realistic prospect of ending that cycle. Yet, moral edification was patently amongst the ethical historians' chief concerns, and this must be regarded as a sincere effort to lessen disorder in the world. What, though, was the maximal extent of the historians' ethical and restorative ambitions? The model of fortune's operation, and in particular its elucidation of how contingency could and often did inhibit the attainment of good ends, implied that reform could only ever achieve so much, even assuming universal conformity to the deliberative ethical guidance that the historians synthesised from their forensics. Historians could not ordinarily have expected communities to be able to adhere absolutely to ethical advice, either in theory or in practice - fortune's disruptions made good ends difficult to identify, pursue, and attain.[1] Even if that had not been so, the model implied that instantaneous communal commitment to reform and an adherence to the very best of ethical advice would have left individuals' ends too vulnerable to reverses that had yet to manifest.[2] In ordinary circumstances, contingency would still impede the attainment of good ends that were somehow recognised and pursued in unison, and sometimes disrupt their relative goodness.[3] In the latter case inadvertent sin would inevitably follow, and so the cycle would propagate afresh despite the best intentions of all.

Ordinarily, then, and even in the most favourable of conventional circumstances, it must have seemed that fortune's reverses, contingencies, were an insurmountable obstacle. Scholars have analysed contemporary realisations of the limitations of human moral reform through a variety

[1] For discussion of the contingent goodness of human will and action, see: Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 55-92.
[2] This point follows logically from the argument exposited in Chapter One and in: Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*'.
[3] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 55-92.

of lenses and with a wide assortment of preoccupations.[4] Common to these studies has been the assumption, so fundamentally engrained as to be left unwritten in most cases, that the highest possible ambition of moral reformers was to *lessen* disorder in the world.[5] No regard has been given to the possibility that reformers might have aimed to eliminate all disorder even outside of the cloister.[6] Thus, twelfth-century ethical thinkers have been cast as the foot soldiers of an ongoing struggle of uncertain duration between good and evil. The moral and spiritual conflict in which they 'fought' had been sparked by original sin, and its only mortal termination would come at death, or with the Second Coming and Christ's victory over the Antichrist, which would precede the Last Judgement and Eschaton. Commendable conduct in the ethical challenges of this life might help to secure salvation upon death, but it was left to none but Christ to end all struggle.

No doubt, this fairly reflected Augustine's understanding of the human condition in the lapsarian state.[7] It speaks also to his views on the roles of Christianity and Christian ethics in securing salvation despite worldly imperfection.[8] Yet, we ought not to forget that Augustine was an early Christian thinker engaged on many ideological fronts in a period of political and cultural turmoil, during which his interpretation of Christianity was often on the defensive. He regularly found himself locked in the defence of his beliefs against heretics and innovators, including the Donatists, Manicheans, and Pelagians. His concern was for formulating a logically-defensible, coherent, and elegant description of the truth of God and the lot and role of humanity. However firm his conviction that the judgements of God's providence would always remain inscrutable, he recognised that the subject was a pandora's box that he and Christianity could not risk opening.[9] And so, in his brief historical sketches he never ventured to test his assertion that Providence's judgements, fortune's individual reverses, are inscrutable.[10] Augustine's assertions concerning the eventual futility of worldly reform were thus predicated on an assumption that the historians eventually challenged and, in the estimation of some of their number, overcame.

The historians were confident that they had identified the precise causes of contingency, but that did not necessarily help them to reform human conduct according to their insight. It is true that many of the historians' own *sententiae* do seem resigned to the eventual futility of all reform.[11] They and their contemporaries penned whole treatises on the theme of contempt for the world and what little had come of past efforts to effect meaningful change.[12] Arguably, though, the

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[4] With specific reference to the historians; restorative ambitions, see, for instance: Thomson, 'Satire, irony, and humour', 115-27. Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, especially 47-8.
[5] See, for instance: Sønnesyn, 'the cultivation of unity', 178-9. D. Bates, *William the Conqueror*, 14.
[6] The most optimistic scholarly assessments themselves reflect only the peculiarly monastic optimism of reform and restoration *within the cloister* – an optimism that at any rate was not shared by our historians. See: G. Constable, 'Renewal and reform in religious life', in R. L. Benson and G. Constable (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), 37-67.
[7] See: *DCD*, 874-9. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 381-6.
[8] See: *DCD*, 874-9. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 381-6.
[9] *DCD*, 895-8. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 405-8.
[10] *DCD*, 895-8. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 405-8.
[11] See, for instance: *HA*, 616-9. *HE*, vol. 3, 8-9.
[12] *HA*, 584-619.

meaning of their reflections in the *Contemptus mundi* tradition have been mischaracterised because some of their statements have read in the absolute.[13] I would caution that the intensity of their lament might have rested on a belief that the desired alternative *was* within grasp. Consider Henry of Huntingdon's treatise on the theme of 'contempt for the world'.[14] Therein, his crosshairs fall, first and foremost, on those vices and transgressions that he considered intrinsically contemptible and that had happened to shape his personal lived experience in the world up to that point.[15] His conclusions at the end of the tract admittedly do sound resigned, especially his plea to 'wish for the death of this death, since we may not escape this living death, except by the death of the body, which is the frontier midway between death and life'.[16] Yet, statements such as these need to be contextualised. Henry wrote those words during the 1130s.[17] Whether or not he meant them in the absolute at the time, he later contradicted them in an equally clear and far more optimistic assessment, written roughly two decades later, which cast the restoration of the present life as an inevitable fulfilment of scriptural prophecy. That later, more expectant assessment of the present life shall be treated in detail in the discussion to follow. In the interim it is enough to suggest that when such pessimistic statements are read in the context of the supremely ambitious restorative effort that the *Historia Anglorum* was engaged, expressions of the futility of this life were meant and/or perceived in the silent conditional.

The best evidence for this contention are those historical narratives that seem to contradict the opinion that the human lot was irredeemable in this present life. In these narratives, a New Caesar is shown wielding his agency to safeguard the community from any contingent impediment, while his shining moral example prompts the instillation of perfect order and union in service of common ends. Most of these narratives appear to concede that order and harmony would eventually end up being disrupted and undone by agency's transience and a reversion to the perversion of the will. Indeed, some might point to these narratives as proof that the historians recognised the eventual futility of all restorative efforts. However, at least one of the narratives goes to great lengths in order to relay a belief that something of the pre-lapsarian state had been restored and would persist in this life, and *in perpetuity*. The logic of the model suggests that no ordinary human could have broken fortune's cycle. However, it ought to now be apparent that the historians, unlike the normative/rational ethicists or theologians, recognised that circumstances could arise under which individuals – New Caesars - could wield extraordinary agency and act unimpeded by contingency. It seems that the ramifications of that idea would far surpass whatever role the type played in the attribution of conventional traits like legitimacy, military prowess, and prestige in the positive sense, and tyranny, corruption, and treachery in the negative sense. The question remains though, did the historians countenance that a New Caesar might have instigated

[13] Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 47-8.
[14] *HA*, 584-619.
[15] *HA*, 584-619.
[16] *HA*, 616-17 [Optemus igitur in hac morte mortem, quia non euademus hanc uiuendi mortem, nisi corporis morte, que scilicet medius terminus est mortis et uite].
[17] *HA*, lxxiv-lxxv.

the restoration of this life to something resembling the prelapsarian state? There is evidence that the answer to that question is yes, and that shall be reviewed below, but it is first necessary to revisit the logic of the ethical problem that the model described, and determine how a New Caesar might have been able to resolve that problem.

Conventionally, a leader's inability to instigate substantive moral reform stemmed both from the difficulty they faced in discerning the good in a world that was in constant flux, and from contingency's interference in their attempts to attain those good ends that they were able to identify.[18] For most people, who willed according to the intellect's synthesis of immediate empirical information with memory of past lessons and experiences, there persisted some perversion of their will, and so they continued to sin. The perversion of the will stemmed from some fault of sense, memory, or intellect. The frailty of the human senses fired the pens of various twelfth-century writers. The littérateur Walter Map, for instance, reflected on the difficulty of determining appropriate action in circumstances when the frailty of the human senses was most pronounced.[19] Yet, Map's anecdotes reflected on those circumstances that were wondrous and hence rare by definition. In conventional experience, the acuity of the senses was usually adequate to accurately equate observed circumstances and objects with some memory of their properties or other pertinent considerations.

Properly nurtured memory enhanced awareness of the senses' frailty and could supply, when required, profiles of the circumstances in which that frailty had formerly led to sin.[20] Map's endeavour, and his individual anecdotes, proved that point.[21] Perhaps memory could not compensate for the fallibility of the senses in every circumstance, but it did well enough most of the time to preserve hope in the value of moral edification. A great deal could be done to mitigate against faults of memory. Most relevantly, one might imbibe the wisdom of ethical histories, predicated as it was on a determination of which past actions had constituted sin. Even so, it would ordinarily have been considered unrealistic to expect those teachings to be internalised and translated into behaviour without misstep. Although the term 'prescriptive ethics' is sometimes helpful to summarise the programme of deliberative moralising that characterises edificatory treatises like the histories, it is important to be clear that, in period, moral guidance was rarely intended to be prescriptive in the absolute.[22] Even the Rule of St Benedict served only as a grounding, and encouraged supplementary interpretation on the part of the individual.[23]

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[18] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 55-92.
[19] C. E. Naylor, 'Authorial purposes in Walter Map's *De nugis curialium*', unpublished MPhil dissertation, University of Cambridge (2016) 14-28. See, for example: Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, ed. and trans. M. R. James, rev. R. A. B. Mynors and C. N. L. Brooke, *De Nugis Curialium, Courtiers' Trifles*, (Oxford, 1983), 118-125; 344-9; 350-65, and see also Map's reflections, 278-9.
[20] Naylor, 'Authorial purposes in Walter Map's *De nugis curialium*', 14-28. Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, 278-9; 118-125; 344-9; 350-65.
[21] Naylor, 'Authorial purposes in Walter Map's *De nugis curialium*', 14-28.
[22] Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, 84-6.
[23] Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, 84-6.

And so, as it largely fell to the individual to process salutary examples that could at some future time help in their free determination of good actions, the intellect proved the last of the restrictive faculties. Even the availability of the most perfect moral code and a leader's commitment to try to adhere to it did not guarantee the rectitude of the will. Sense and memory of certain things and experiences might fire the passions, under the influence of which the intellect might present the will with objects contrary to the good.[24] If reason cannot subordinate the passions and if the intellect cannot see through them to the memory of those greater objects that have yet to be attained then the will, whatever prior commitments were made, might falter. Besides the failings of human beings' internal faculties and the resultant fragility of the will, the absence of external goods often proved inimical to moral and spiritual advancement because it precluded good courses. Action that could be initiated remained at the mercy of fortune's temporal perturbances, i.e. the disorder and ongoing disordering of the world. Even the pursuit, by truly virtuous means, of an end that was known to be good could result in sin because of some unforeseen shift in circumstances between the time of action and outcome.[25] In short, contemporary theory dictated that even a leader who steadfastly adhered to the guidance of authoritative ethical teachings remained at risk of sin as an inevitable consequence of the persistent failings of internal faculties and/or the absence or shifting nature of external goods.

The apparent theory works rather differently for a New Caesar. Each step in the processing of empirically-derived information and the synthesis of that information into willed ends can be understood as an end in itself. The type's basic implication is that the Caesar who wills these in their proper order, and as subordinate ends, can attain them unimpeded by the usual contingencies. Arguably, that conclusion stands without need of further qualification, and it may well have done in-period, but it also seems worthwhile to question precisely how fortune's favour might have helped with regards to some of these steps. Studies have demonstrated the importance of external goods in Augustinian ethics, contra arguments that it is fundamentally intentionalist or Stoic, and note that Augustine reflected on the dependence of the faculties of sense and intellect on the bodily external goods.[26] He was well aware that it is the absence of some external advantage, in this case a bodily good, that limits acuity of vision, smell, taste etc. One might lose an eye in an accident, or recover the use of the olfactory sense after experiencing some change of environment – both of which would likely have been categorised reverses of fortune. Perhaps one might have been born with a bodily disability, or some physical advantage in strength or height or endurance, given the common view that the unborn shared in the guilt of the 'father' and so could be visited with, at least, a temporal penalty. Presumably the New Caesar's senses would have been disposed at birth or as a result of later reverses towards the maximal limits of human nature, such that empirical information derived of them would have been more trustworthy than could typically have been expected. Further, the Caesar's ready supply of external goods allowed them access to a

[24] On the passions, see: Brachtendorf, 'Cicero and Augustine on the passions', 295-307, especially 300-307.
[25] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 55-92.
[26] Clair, *Discerning the Good*, 28-38

broader range of advice and advisors than would have been available to other leaders. Given these presumed advantages, a New Caesar stood the best possible chance of perfecting the discernment of ethical advice and its translation into good actions. What is without doubt from the evidence is that actions would not have been precluded through any lack in other external goods, and nor would the ends they served have been impeded, provided that they were completed before the Caesar's fortune eventually diminished. Given all of this, the only remaining obstacle was the timeframe in which it was possible to attain certain ends. Chapter Four described one limitation of cosmic agency – that certain ends intrinsically took time to attain. When a New Caesar crossed the English Channel, even he did not embark upon the journey and arrive instantly. While travelling, and until his ends were attained, he remained reliant upon the continuance of fortune's favour. Given the contingent nature of goodness in a world subject to fortune's temporal perturbances, how then could the New Caesar be assured that the 'good' ends to which he aspired would still be good when reached? Arguably, it is inherent in the proposition that 'fortune would vouchsafe the New Caesar's attainment of any reasonable end' that the intrinsic nature of that end did not shift - anything to the contrary would not constitute the attainment of that end, only an end bearing some similarity. That assurance must have followed, in part, from the prudence of one who possessed such advantages of perception allied with the intellect's cognition of how ethical cause would manifest in physical effect over time.

Armed with the fruits of the past's ethical lessons, as well as a prudence that saw through fortune's obfuscation of the good, both in the present and out to some indeterminate future point, the New Caesar needed only to follow where the blinding logic of the will signalled – God. In that circumstance, the will for the *summum bonum* became irresistible. The New Caesar thus willed a oneness with God, and so embarked upon fulfilling that will, subordinating a vast sequence of objectives to the highest of all.[27] Provided that the subordinate ends could be effected and accomplished before cosmic agency waned, they would not be impeded by contingency.[28] It would have been crucial at this point to instigate the conditions under which the nation's subjects would have been able to emulate the example shining forth without let or hindrance – heading off contingencies that had not yet manifest before they could interfere in the process of communal reforms. With nothing left to inhibit the cultivation of virtue, and guided by the examples of the histories and the New Caesar himself, the development of superlative prudence would lead each to whatever vocation would best serve the collective's ends.[29] Order would gradually emerge, as each individual came into the possession of exactly the material resources required to attain their proximate and intermediate ends. The stratification of society according to just necessity would prevail over the disordered and inefficient vicissitudes that came of greed fed by injustice, both perceived and actual.

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[27] Clair, *Discerning the Good*, especially 35-8.
[28] See Chapter Three.
[29] For two contrasting metaphors on this idea, see: *Carmen*, 6-7. *GR*, 758-61.

Arguably, this process is illustrated at least twice in the post-conquest histories. The *Carmen*'s account of the New Caesar William the Conqueror's invasion of England, that was analysed at length in Chapter Two, enunciates that each of his adherents referred their pursuit of various individual ends to the literal unifying end of the conquest, and the metaphorical unifying ends of order and salvation.[30] It is important to be clear, here, that the *Carmen* conceptualised events according to a more simplistic causal paradigm than many of the later histories. Dominant in Guy's narrative was the proportionate relationship between virtue and divine favour. Likewise, the inverse - vice and permissive divine punishment. For Guy, the events of the invasion conformed to this straightforward rationale quite readily, which minimised the need to synthesise a coherent theoretical response to contingency. It was the vexations of Rufus' reign, and a growing concern from some quarters that the tenet of immanent justice was becoming indefensible, which appear to have prompted the later historians to resolve the model of fortune's operation.[31] Although it was framed according to a more rudimentary causal paradigm, the *Carmen*'s sketch offers much to corroborate the propositions suggested above, and illustrates that the process of communal unification that was set in action when absolute agency met the appropriate will for the highest of ends.

A more sophisticated exposition of similar ideas is to be found in the final book of William of Malmesbury's *Historia nouella*. William was faced with explaining the struggles that Earl Robert of Gloucester faced in his bid to uphold the claim of his legitimate sister, Empress Matilda, to the throne of England. He had earlier compared Earl Robert and Caesar:[32]

> Julius, having no part in the true faith, rested his hopes on his fortune, as he said, and on the valour of his legions. Robert, distinguished for his Christian piety, entirely relied on the aid of the Holy Spirit and Our Blessed Lady, Mary.[33]

By William's estimation, Caesar had prejudiced his safety and the safety of his people as a result of his overreliance and arrogant trust in the continuance of fortune and external advantage, whereas Robert humbly attributed his Caesarean agency to the grace of God, signified by the Holy Spirit, and aspired only to virtue, signified by the Virgin Mary.[34] William elucidated the effects, both potential and actual, of Earl Robert's synthesis of agency and virtue in two sea crossing narratives. Earl Robert's first crossing is undertaken at the orders of his sister and leader of the Angevin cause, the Empress Matilda, despite his protestations at the imprudence of the course.[35] What resulted of

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[30] *Carmen*, 6-7.
[31] See Chapter One.
[32] See also: Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 52.
[33] *HN*, 60-61 [Quanuis iniqua comparatione Iulius et Rotbertus conferantur. Iulius enim, uerae fidei extorris, in fortuna sua, ut dicebat, et legionum uirtute spem reclinabat. Rotbertus, Christiana pietate insignis, in Sancti Spiritus et dominae sanctae Mariae patrocinio totus pendulus erat].
[34] See also: Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 52. For Mary as a signifier of perfect virtue, see: William of Malmesbury, *Miracula Sancta Mariae Virginis*, ed. and trans. R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, *The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Woodbridge, 2015).
[35] *HN*, 122-9.

Robert's subordination to the Empress is relayed metaphorically as his crossing is beset by a storm in the English Channel. His flotilla disperses except for those ships conveying the earl and his closest retainers.[36] William's suggestion, as I remarked in an earlier study, seems to have been that the empress' imprudence had brought a metaphorical storm upon the Angevin Cause, but that the earl had managed to safeguard *his* adherents from disastrous contingency.[37] The sad fact of the matter - seemingly the foremost point of argument behind the *Historia nouella* - was that while the empress' legitimacy had placed her in overall command of the Angevins, Robert of Gloucester was a markedly superior leader, and one with boundless potential for instituting a more ordered and hence more conducive kingdom.[38] Earl Robert's observation of the conventions of filial duty and nominal subordination left him powerless to decline his sister's request to travel to Normandy, and powerless to watch as her retainers were scattered by her imprudence. Once he had discharged his assigned duty and was, for a short time, left to lead on his own terms, he resolved to return to England in steadfast observation of his conventional duty. The return crossing contrasts starkly with the first voyage.[39] The set-piece articulates what the earl might have achieved had he, and not his sister, been the legitimate leader of the Angevins:

> God of His grace showed signal favour to his dutiful intention, so that of so great a number of ships not one wandered from its course but all cleft calm seas either side by side or in orderly line ahead. Nor did the billows assail the ships with fury but escorted them like an attentive retinue, the way in which the look of the sea is wont to be most pleasant, when the waves glide gently up and play against the shores. So, the happy barks entered Wareham harbour…[40]

William painted the civil war of Stephen's reign a perilous time, when intrigue, betrayal, and both sides' manifestations of various further vices kept individuals trapped under a suffocating ceiling of contingency. One of the conflict's leaders demonstrated the potential to have changed that, but the earl, for all of his potential and virtue, occupied a precarious middle ground. Human convention dictated that it was his duty to follow the commands of his legitimate leader, the empress, who acted on questionable judgement. In those instances, his assent to the empress' vice exposed him to contingency, while he was imperilled by his willing refusal of the agency that he might otherwise have wielded. Sometimes, as proved the case during his crossing to Normandy, he found himself in a position to retain sufficient agency to supervene the contingency that came his way, and shield those closest to him from its dangers. The account of his capture by Stephen's forces during the Angevin retreat from Winchester shows that this was not always the case. There, William articulated that the earl's obeisance to human duty ran to a fault, as by it he waived his own agency,

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[36] *HN*, 124-5.
[37] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', especially 36-7.
[38] Forster, 'William of Malmesbury and *fortuna*', 37.
[39] *HN*, 128-9.
[40] *HN*, 128–9 [piae uoluntati Deus per suam gratiam egregie fauit ut nulla e tanto numero nauium longius euagaretur, sed omnes, uel pariter iunctis lateribus uel leniter unae ante alias progressae, placida sulcarent maria. Nec uero uiolentia fluctuum nauigia impetebat, sed quodam famulatu prosequebatur; sicut aspectus maris solet esse gratissimus, cum placidis allisa lapsibus alludit unda littoribus. In portum ergo Warham delatae].

which could have isolated him from fortune's reverses.[41] In fact, the description of the earl's return from Normandy suggests that had he been the overall Angevin leader, fortune's reverses might not have been inevitable. When the Angevin ships sailed at the earl's behest, and not Matilda's, the flotilla encountered no contingency. The earl had reprised the agency to safeguard his followers from exposure to fortune's reverses – this time *he* took the decision to sail, and he did so, in contrast to his sister, both for the right reasons and at the right time.[42] His prudent example not only keeps the flotilla from encountering reverses, but also shines out across the fleet. The image suggests that each individual, on each ship, worked in harmony towards the end of order and unified progress towards 'harbour', a term metaphorically synonymous with salvation.[43] William's metaphor intimates the order that Earl Robert might have been able to instil had he been at liberty to fully exercise the agency that he had possessed. That tantalising prospect is juxtaposed against the reality that the earl and his flotilla arrive back to.[44] Upon arrival back on English shores, he leads the prosecution of an effective land campaign against royal possessions, but suddenly the momentum of his and the Angevins' unified purpose is deflated by the Empress' command that they desist.[45] The contrast between the earl and the empress' efficacy is vivid. Under the earl 'not one of so many [Angevin] ships [had] wandered from its course'.[46] As a result of the Empress' intervention, the Angevin knights were left to disperse.[47] The earl's leadership might have brought the Angevins to 'harbour', while the empress could only send them 'back each to his own home'.[48]

Having found the courage to follow prudence along the temperate path, according to justice, subjects' temptation to sin would diminish until, at least logically, sinful action would cease entirely. It is unclear whether the oft-repeated theological precept that human sin was inevitable would have been understood as conditional in light of this theory – that would require much further work. In any case, while the Caesar's cosmic agency persisted it would have made little practicable difference - contingency could be prevented from impeding good ends. Assuming that these extraordinary circumstances might have rendered *all* further sin avoidable, then the solution to the problem posed by fortune draws nearer. If all sin could indeed be avoided, then actions would no longer engender further reverses of fortune. However, any reverses that had not yet manifest might still threaten order, should cosmic agency wane before they could be negated. In other words, even a perfectly ordered present might have remained vulnerable to the tyranny of a disordered past.

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[41] *HN*, 96-7; 104-7; 112-13.
[42] *HN*, 128-9.
[43] Sobecki, *The Sea and Medieval English Literature*, especially 36-7; 37 n. 59.
[44] *HN*, 130-33.
[45] *HN*, 130-33.
[46] *HN*, 128-9 [nulla e tanto numero nauium longius euagaretur].
[47] *HN*, 130-33.
[48] *HN*, 128-9 [portum]; 132-3 [ad sua quique sunt reuersi].

It is an entirely possible that the theory might have terminated here, and the extent of the historians' ambition was for periods of order that, however transient, were highly conducive to spiritual advancement. Yet, one remarkable episode might speak to a still-higher aspiration.

*Fortune extinguished, paradise regained*

Could any devout medieval Christian have countenanced that fortune could be extinguished in this life and something of the Edenic State recovered? The two most celebrated thinkers of the medieval west, St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, both weighed in on the matter of the shifting nature of external things in this world, and the prospect of Edenic restoration. What did these paradigmatic thinkers believe was the maximal potential of human achievement in this life? And how might the different approach to the issue adopted by the twelfth-century historians have led them to a very different conclusion?

Of the two great doctors' responses, Thomas Aquinas' is perhaps of most interest, for although the product of the thirteenth century, it more overtly addressed the problems that engaged the historians. His dissatisfaction with the contrast between the beatitude of Adam's life in the garden and the lot of lapsarian humanity prompted him to reflect on these questions in his celebrated *Summa theologica*, in which he rationalised the sources of Adam's happiness and sought to explicate the proximate causes of our own struggles in the world.[49] Aquinas' efforts have been studied at length by John Bowlin, who summarised the doctor's analysis of the Edenic state.

> In Eden the acquisition of virtue was assured by grace that was its principal cause, just as opportunities to act virtuously and grow in virtue were plentiful, never once impeded by the absence of external goods. In fact, no good was 'wanting which a good-will could desire to have'. Food was plentiful and the climate always temperate. The body was strong and free of defect, fault, or disproportion. Death and disease were unknown, as were slavery and tyranny. Dangerous animals slept at Adam's feet. Plants and inanimate things proved no hindrance at all.[50]

Aquinas also noted that Adam had possessed knowledge of all things that humans could naturally know, and divine guidance 'guaranteed that Adam was not 'deceived in a manner to which his knowledge did not extend".[51] He commanded his passions, which were "consequent upon the judgement of reason', and were never once elicited by the shifting character of 'external things".[52] All of these observations contrast with the familiar impediments faced in the lapsarian state. As is apparent from the above, for Aquinas, the circumscribed grace that accompanied the outward efforts of fallen humanity meant that our actions were often undone by contingencies. Further, virtue's acquisition was hindered because external goods were distributed amongst us according to fortune's whims, and not according to necessity. His dissatisfaction with the contrast between these two very different prospects prompted him to explore avenues that humanity might take to rise again, with God's grace, out of the present misery.

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[49] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, especially 213-21.
[50] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 213.
[51] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 214.
[52] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 214.

Much earlier, Augustine had maintained that lasting happiness necessarily escaped humanity in its lapsarian state. Where Aquinas would later dwell more determinately on proximate circumstances, Augustine more reductively attributed the wretchedness of this life to the instability introduced into the world by Original Sin. For Augustine, in general terms, the world's vicissitudes often frustrated good actions, and kept anything but transitory glimpses of happiness out of reach.[53] Aquinas, however, wondered whether this diagnosis might have been premature. He, like Augustine, resisted a wholesale Stoic rendering of the moral virtues, preferring to develop an Aristotelian model that acknowledged fortune's affects on happiness in the contingent world.[54] While the Stoics defined the extent of virtue according to the goodness of will and intent, virtue, for the Aristotelian, was understood as the measure to which the individual was able to take habitual action toward and actually attain their good ends, subject as they were to all sorts of contingent disruptions.[55] Redolent of Augustine's doctrine of Love, Aquinas distinguished between the proximate and final ends of actions undertaken, and leant on the theological virtues, initially, to explain how eternal happiness could follow a life of frustrated actions. He believed that those who exercised Faith and Charity by referring their pursuit of proximate ends to the highest end would secure the latter even when the former was disrupted.[56] Yet, that was not to say that those who exercised these theological virtues became happy *in this life* no matter whether their proximate ends were frustrated or not. Aquinas' residual dissatisfaction is exemplified, for example, in the case of those who try but fail to save the life of friends, owing to some misfortune or deficiency of external goods. In such a case, how can fortune's affect be considered negligible in respect of a people's present happiness, even those most steadfast in Faith?[57] Charity, after all, calls for love of one's neighbour as well as love of God, and yet fortune's intervention in such instances can greatly impede that end. One might imagine manifold examples of well-meaning actions yielding traumatic and troublesome outcomes for oneself and others. Aquinas must also have recognised Faith's dependency on prudence, whose acquisition and exercise is prejudiced as we encounter contingencies which preclude the attainment of good ends. With the happiness of Adam still inviting comparison, Aquinas was unable to shake his dissatisfaction with the notion that Faith and Charity alone were sufficient springs of transcendent happiness in this life.

Aquinas' eventual solution, though, did not follow the historians in deconstructing fortune and seeking some practical means of ending fortune's scrambling of the distribution of external goods and propagating contingency. Instead, he reinforced his Stoic rendering of the theological virtues. Bowlin's summary is worth quoting in full:

> But what alternative might replace asceticism? For Aquinas it must be hope, for only hope can address the discontent that the comparison with Adam generates. It is not hope that Providence dressed in fortune's jacket will treat us gently, for hope, by

[53] Clair, *Discerning the Good*, 29-38.
[54] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 214-21.
[55] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 214-21.
[56] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 215-221.
[57] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 218-19

> definition, regards the consequences of our agency. We hope for something that we might achieve by our own doings, and there is little that we can do to affect Providence. Rather, it is the eschatological hope that comes only with the assistance of God's grace; the hope that stretches forth towards the most difficult of goods, the fellowship of everlasting happiness. That fellowship will be characterised by peace, by concord between friends, and by freedom from those external hindrances that might otherwise threaten virtue and happiness. It follows that to hope in this way entails yearning for a happiness that transcends fortune's reach. And yet, because hope cannot be without charity, and because charity entails not only love of God but also friendship with Him, genuine acts of hope, in a sense, already achieve that happiness. Success is guaranteed, the difficult good achieved, in the very act of hoping. Or, more precisely, those who hope already attain God, on whose help they lean, even as they yearn for that perfect heavenly fellowship that they expect to have even as it escapes them now.[58]

Aquinas was not as dour as Augustine on the prospect of attaining happiness in this life. He did believe that some degree of happiness could be enjoyed before death, even if fortune treated us 'unkindly', but his optimism required some deference to Stoic virtue. This was still the familiar solution to fortune's difficulties – he, like many thinkers who had gone before him, looked to transcend life's difficulties rather than resolve them.[59] In practical terms, his answer was tantamount to a white flag, an acknowledgement that fortune precluded Edenic happiness in this life, whose restoration would need to await the eschaton. Why could Aquinas do no better? His own answer was that he and humanity at large were, in Bowlin's words, 'largely ignorant of the ways of Divine Providence, the true source of all things that happen here [ostensibly] by accident'.[60]

Augustine and Aquinas were both clear that their efforts to attain any higher understanding of the lot of lapsarian humanity, and presumably offer any restorative wisdom, were contingent upon that which it seemed would always escape them – a greater understanding of the ways of Divine Providence. To be sure, they were able to describe the operation of Providence as it resided in the divine mind according the formula that the fall of humanity was the consequence of Original Sin. That was reasonable. What they were less willing or able to do was to investigate Providence's temporal ways - to consider the relationship between human conduct and Providence's unfolding through time. Aquinas' resignation that there was little humanity could do to affect Providence, although correct on the extra-temporal register, is a statement that can easily mislead with regards to human agency within time. Humanity could do nothing to affect the singular narrative of Providence as it resided in the omniscient divine mind, but, with grace, their free choices could do much to effect and 'affect' its course within time. Where Augustine and Aquinas feared to tread, the historians happily sought patterns in lapsarian humanity's experience of creation. Chapter One of the present study has explicated some of the hitherto-unrecognised fruits of their analytical enterprise. Their efforts surpassed investigation alone, though. They also conveyed a deliberative framework for human actions, whose ambition was to effect a *worldly* restoration the likes of which the fathers and *doctores* could scarcely have hoped for. Arguably, past New Caesars are prominent in

[58] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 220.
[59] On transcending rather than resolving discord and disorder, see Chapter One.
[60] Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics*, 219.

their narratives because, in them, the historians saw embodied the agency to instil conditions conducive to the attainment of salvation, and, even, to restore much of the prelapsarian state in the present life. Some of the historians' narratives suggest that this had actually happened, but even in those cases, most admit that fortune eventually reasserted its tyranny, and order again gave way to lapsarian chaos. Even these greatest of past achievements had collapsed back into what William of Malmesbury called the 'whirlpool of vices'.[61] Would this have been regarded truly inevitable? Would ethical restorative efforts always have been considered pale illusions in comparison with eschatological hope?

Perhaps not. There is one episode in the historians' oeuvres that, arguably, suggests that something of the Edenic state had been restored in perpetuity, and fortune extinguished for good. Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* surveyed the history of the peoples of England, from the invasion of Julius Caesar up to the accession of Henry II in1154. The passages of interest occupy the finale of the history's ultimate version and pertain to the 1153 invasion of England by Duke Henry of Anjou, the duke's struggle against King Stephen for the English throne, and his eventual accession in 1154.[62]

Even by the standards of the great rhetorical histories, these passages are wrought tightly with meaning.[63] In crafting them, Henry wove a sophisticated web of reference and allusion to literary and scriptural topics. Earlier passages set the scene: Henry of Anjou had inherited the dukedom of Normandy and the hereditary right to England upon the death of his father; the King of France had captured a castle at Neufmarché and handed it over to King Stephen's son Eustace; and King Stephen himself was besieging forces loyal to the Angevins at Wallingford.[64] The finale opens with a personified England's verse appeal to Duke Henry to come save her that is clearly a conscious reworking and inversion of Italy's warning to Julius Caesar as he prepared to cross the Rubicon. This is a rich passage that has attracted much comment, which shall be considered below. After Duke Henry has resolved to cross to England, the narrative relates his crossing to England and then proceeds to describe the scene before the would-be *Pharsalus* at Malmesbury. After a vivid and dynamic account of the two forces' march towards one another on the apparent field of battle, Henry springs an unexpected twist - God had disposed that the two armies would, in fact, be kept apart by a flooded river. After further efforts to bring the conflict to a decisive, bloody resolution are quashed in turn by Providence, the leaders attempt to broker a peace until, we are told, 'the dawn of perfect happiness broke for the great duke', as his two greatest enemies, Stephen's son Eustace and Simon, earl of Northampton, died at the same time 'by the Providence of God (*Dei prouidentia*)'.[65] Henry commented that God was 'in His great kindness preparing the tranquillity of His realm'.[66] As the movements of the opposing forces are noted, the emphasis soon switches to

[61] *GR*, 560-1 [gurges uitiorum].
[62] *HA*, 760-77.
[63] *HA*, 760-77.
[64] *HA*, 756-9; 757 n. 160.
[65] *HA*, 768-9 [diluculum felicitatis duci magno serenissime comparuit].
[66] *HA*, 768-9 [iam Deus ipse tranquillitatem regni ipsius preparabat benignissime].

what Henry considered the joyful adoption of Duke Henry as King Stephen's heir, when 'the serenity of peace shone through them'.[67] He told how God's mercy, as it radiated through the king and duke, 'brought to the broken realm of England a dawn of peace at the end of a night of misery'.[68] Some magnates, who could not be guided from their corruption, entreated King Stephen to renege on his pledges and bring the peace to nothing, but Providence saw that their disruptive efforts came to nought - King Stephen died in October 1154.[69] The *Historia Anglorum*'s closing passages relate how Duke Henry learned of Stephen's death, cleverly articulate that the duke had gained in wisdom since his invasion of England the year before, and, finally, invoke allusion to the Second Coming of Christ and the universal resurrection to eulogise his achievement.

These passages have been the subject of several studies.[70] Diana Greenway reflected on their meaning in a 1996 article, and appended additional commentary in her OMT edition of the same year.[71] More recently, Catherine Clarke looked more closely at Henry's use of allusion and its role in conveying his broader ideological argument. For Clarke, Duke Henry was cast from the outset as England's saviour, a messianic figure whose divinely-sanctioned benevolence intentionally, and from the outset, subverted Lucan's familiar and pessimistic rendering of the over-reaching tyrant who thrived amongst chaos.[72] She contended that the duke's depiction showed how he awaited his *aduentus* to 'his rightful kingdom', while England's personified appeals to him recalled both the biblical bride awaiting her bridegroom and chivalric traditions.[73] Clarke concluded that Henry undercut common tropes to illustrate that Duke Henry was *not* Lucan's dark Caesar, and that *God* controlled events, not 'chance and chaos'.[74]

In an earlier study, I contended that Clarke's interpretation overlooked the unflattering portions of Duke Henry's portrayal.[75] The duke's introduction makes it quite clear that he had, at the outset, been rushing headlong to repeat the dark Caesar's mistakes – chiefly the arrogant and boastful *fortuna*-reliant prosecution of the civil war by means of bloodshed.[76] This distinction is made clear in England's verse appeal to the young duke and the dialogue between the two that follows. England, in her appeal, seems to express her plight as though she is trapped on fortune's wheel: 'I, noble England, am falling, though not yet in complete ruin. I can scarcely say 'I had been

[67] *HA*, 770-71 [per ipsos pacis serenitas … resplenduit].
[68] *HA*, 770-71 [pacis auroram et noctis erumpnose finem regno diruto contribuit Anglorum].
[69] *HA*, 774-5.
[70] See also: Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 62-78.
[71] D. Greenway, 'Authority, convention, and observation in Henry of Huntingdon's Historia Anglorum', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1996), 105-21.
[72] C. A. M. Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon: history, authority, and civil war in twelfth-century England', in L. Ashe and I. Patterson (eds.), *War and Literature* (Woodbridge, 2014),61-83, at 82.
[73] Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon', 78.
[74] Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon', 82.
[75] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 62-78.
[76] *HA*, 760-63. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 68.

(*fueram*)', for 'I am (*sum*)' has departed'.[77] England's descent is counterposed against Duke Henry's summiting of the wheel: 'He comes (*uenit*)', they say again, 'he comes (*uenit*)'.[78] The frame of reference, then, is England's longing to ascend again to the perfect heights of fortune's favour that the duke was experiencing at that time. Her request, if considered outside of its wider context, might look superficially reasonable. Yet that would run at odds with Henry and his contemporaries' overarching arguments, that were the spine of the ethical historians' endeavour: to will good fortune is to will fortune's propagation, and that can only come as a result of further sin. Their works articulate that one instead ought to will order and actions that will serve to mitigate, or presumably if appropriate circumstances were to present themselves, eradicate, fortune's rise and fall. When England delivers her appeal, she had manifestly not yet learned that lesson. The charge against Duke Henry, though, is slightly different.

There is little criticism of Duke Henry's higher end: his words allude to the second resurrection, i.e. the resurrection of the body that will take place at the Last Judgement, when the souls of the elect will return to their bodies to live a life of eternal bliss.[79] His suggestion, then, is remarkable - he sought to restore England to a state of *eternal* paradise: "England, arise! Or rather, rise again! Dead one, I give you back your life".[80] There could have been no ambiguity here about the ambition that Henry attributed to the young duke - Augustine had been clear that the first resurrection was baptism, and the second was the universal resurrection and Last Judgement, when the damned would rise for punishment and the elect would rise to assume the eternal life of bliss, 'the only life truly worthy of the name [life]'.[81] The ideological implication of returning England to life, then, was not that it should function again as it did before King Stephen's reign, but that it should *live* –function for perpetuity in perfect harmonic bliss. In Augustine's words, 'all men are dead in sin'.[82] The Duke's ambition, then, would presumably have been considered laudable, but his explicit Caesarism cannot be wholly written off as clever subversion. It is the duke's immediate substantive ends – his means to that good higher end – that Henry castigates, and it is at that point that he still harboured those immediate ambitions that the duke had truly been a New Caesar. There is extensive evidence to support this reading. For instance, England asks him if he perceives the battles that Stephen was causing, and his reply sounds as vain Caesarism: "I want him to start them, for surely there would be no glory if he stirred up no battles … the glory is greater when the few conquer the many than when the many do so … if the battle is not twofold, neither shall my glory be twofold, It is much more brilliant to conquer kings than to conquer one king".[83] In the

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[77] *HA*, 760-61. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 66.
[78] *HA*, 760-61.
[79] *DCD*, 903-6. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 415-8.
[80] *HA*, 760-61 ['Anglia surge, | Immo resurge, tuam refero tibi mortua uitam].
[81] *DCD*, 905. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 418 [sola uita dicenda est].
[82] *DCD*, 904. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 416 [pro omnibus mortuis uiuus mortuus est unus, id est nullum habens omnino peccatum].
[83] *HA*, 760-763 ['Moueat uolo, quippe | Gloria nulla foret, si prelia nulla moueret'] ['Gloria maior | est multos paucis, quam multos uincere multis'] ['Si non pugna duplex, nec erit michi gloria duplex, | Multo magisque nitet reges quam uincere regem'].

*Pharsalia*, Cicero had urged Pompey to defer to fate and 'let *fortuna* whelm the nations [and their kings] in a single overthrow'.[84] Duke Henry shows awareness that he possesses the agency to effect these ends, but while all knew it had been *fortuna* that bestowed Caesar with his agency, the duke calls it 'grace of Christ Himself, which my action, and equally the king's, win for me'.[85] His claim is that the agency he commanded was justified, but Caesar had made the same claim as he crossed the Rubicon, with the exclamation that, 'here I leave peace behind me and legality which has been scorned already [by my enemies]; henceforth I follow *Fortuna*'.[86] Lucan seemingly implied that the justifications for the ensuing carnage were largely irrelevant when viewed with hindsight of the war's consequences. Arguably, here again Henry was testing his audience's cognisance of history's lessons, encouraging the prudent reader to doubt Duke Henry's own affirmations of the justness of his plan. If any could have doubted that the duke aspired to attain his higher end through sinful Caesarean means, that doubt is removed by his admission that he would prosecute a campaign of bloodshed to effect peace: "I sow [the seeds of] peace, though belatedly; through the bloodshed I seek peace for you [England]".[87] The problem with his plan, according to the model, was that it would propagate fortune afresh. Duke Henry admits as much in his acknowledgement that his plan would only instigate peace 'belatedly'. He wanted to 'gain possession' of England and promised belated peace.[88] Given anxieties over dark Caesarism, and the ubiquity of Lucanian imagery and its attendant ideas in the cultural milieu, it seems improbable that an audience could have missed the dangers of a worldly prince who spoke such words.

If any doubt remained that Duke Henry was by then still a dark Caesar, then it is removed by the narrative description of his invasion: the duke, 'driven onwards by a storm', successfully landed on England's shores. Henry, like his contemporaries, invoked the familiar image that had become stock for demonstrating that the subject's fortune outdid even Caesar's.[89] The following passage drives home the point that his plan would have propagated sin and fortune: the treatment of the initial phase of the invasion invokes essentially the same invasion motifs that the *Gesta Stephani*'s author favoured – that of his foes being shaken and brought low as though beneath a thunderclap. This motif, as Chapter Four demonstrated, alluded to the dark consequences of Caesar's invasion of Italy, and to his instigation of reverses that he expected to disadvantage his foes.[90] Henry, though, preferred the simile of the 'reed-bed struck by the quivering west wind' to the thunderclap.[91] This was hardly a flattering emendation, as Henry had earlier used the simile to relate England's suffering upon the arrival of King Swein, with whom he noted were always

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[84] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 374-5 [Inuoluat populos una fortuna ruina]. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 67.
[85] *HA*, 762-3 ['Ipsius gratia Christi, | quam michi conciliat mea nec minus actio regis'].
[86] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 18-19 [hic pacem temerataque iura relinquo ; | Te, Fortuna, sequor.]. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 68.
[87] *HA*, 762-3 [Pacem sero sero, pacem tibi sanguine quero]. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 68.
[88] *HA*, 762-3 [te potiar].
[89] *HA*, 762-3 [tempestate propulsus occupasset].
[90] See Chapter Four.
[91] *HA*, 762-3 [uelet arundinetum zephiro uibrante collisum].

associated: 'his three companions – plunder, burning, and killing – and all England lamented and shook like a reed-bed struck by the quivering west wind'.[92] Otherwise, several of the motifs that are present in the *Gesta Stephani*'s castigations of dark and possibly even Satanic Caesars are used and substantively unaltered. Henry also notes the grief or joy that was felt by those who anticipated overthrow or acquisition of newfound power.[93] The duke shares Caesar's famous dislike of delay, and, like Caesar's, his army numbered few.[94] There are also contrasting views on the prudence of his having undertaken a stormy crossing, which divided opinion in the kingdom.[95] In other words, the duke's conduct was hardly a unifying example. The duke was not, up to this point of the narrative, the unifying arm of 'Christ's grace' that he purported to be.[96] There might be cause to suggest, even, that he was being cast as a Caesarean Antichrist. That contention will require fuller treatment below, but in any case Henry at least wanted his audience to question any 'mouth speaking great things'.[97]

The duke proceeded after his landing to lay siege to the castle of Malmesbury, but King Stephen gathered the royal armies to meet him in a pitched battle.[98] Italy's address to Caesar at the Rubicon, and the general's deliberations before he finally crossed, had been so strongly emphasised in *Pharsalia* because it had been the crucial moment at which the consequences that followed passed to inevitability. Henry also accentuated England's appeal and the duke's crossing of the English Channel, but then his narrative springs a surprise: events at Malmesbury reveal, contrary to what his audience might have expected, that the Channel had *not*, in fact, been Duke Henry's 'Rubicon'.[99] His description of what happened at Malmesbury betrays a desire to test his audience, and shock any who had wrongly assumed that Duke Henry's crossing of the English Channel had been another Rubicon moment, i.e. an action that had made bloodshed and the onset of a dark Caesarean tyranny inevitable.[100] Henry heightens the tension as the two forces march toward one another, describing the gleaming armies in increasingly vivid detail.[101] Everything is done to support the earlier implication that Duke Henry's choice had left carnage inevitable. The impression is all-but confirmed as Henry adds that God had sent a tempest to propel the Angevin troops onwards and blind the king's men.[102] Yet, at the very climax of the passage, Henry knocks his carefully stacked house of cards straight back down: swelling of the river Avon had apparently

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[92] *HA*, 342-3 [quem semper comitabantur tres socie, predatio, combustio, occisio, frenduit omnis Anglia et commota est uelut harundinetum zephiro uibrante collisum].
[93] *HA*, 762-3.
[94] *HA*, 762-3.
[95] *HA*, 762-3.
[96] *HA*, 762-3 [gratia Christi].
[97] Daniel 7:7-8.
[98] *HA*, 764-5.
[99] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 72-3.
[100] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 70-73.
[101] *HA*, 764-5.
[102] *HA*, 764-5. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 71.

prevented the troops from joining battle.[103] In revealing this after it had seemed as though battle was already joined, Henry catches his audience off guard, and tacitly rebukes any who arrived at the premature conclusion that there would be another *Pharsalus*; that another king would be lost to dark Caesarism; that bloodshed had been inevitable, and that it all would have been *right*.[104] Rather, 'God had provided that He would deliver the land to His child without bloodshed'.[105] God knew that Duke Henry, unlike Caesar and the earlier New Caesars, was wholly well-meaning but misguided – He knew that the duke would guide his people into a life of eternal bliss, a 'Second Coming' in *this* life, with only the slightest guiding revelation. And so, His benign reprimand, His blocking of the route across what would have been the duke's *true* Rubicon, the Avon, opened the young leader's eyes to the very message that, as it happened, Henry of Huntingdon had propagated throughout the *Historia Anglorum* – that there was no virtue, and no progress, *however* it *looked*, in sinning to attain worldly ends through fortune's transitory boon.

The confrontation at Malmesbury was the climax of Henry's entire historical endeavour, as well as his narrative of Stephen's reign. Henry later relayed what Duke Henry's recognition of God's prompt, and his subsequent reform, had achieved: After Eustace's death left Stephen heirless, the king and the duke signed a peace, the latter being appointed successor to the kingdom.[106] When Stephen died, messengers travelled to Normandy, informing the duke that England awaited his arrival and assumption of the crown.[107] At this point, Henry inserted a crucial detail that must have been intended to contrast with the duke's 1153 crossing during a storm and, furthermore, to resonate with the whole tradition of Caesar's fortune-aided sea crossing. He mentions that, despite the news, Duke Henry did not cross to England immediately *because a storm was blowing*.[108] In other words, the duke had learned not to trust his life and that of his country in the continuance of fortune. This affirmed the implication that Duke Henry had, by then, become what the historians had hoped for – a New Caesar who had learned, *before* his agency could wane and crush him under the turning wheel of fortune, to always chose what Cicero would have called the *honestum* above what many of the audience might have imagined to be the immediate *utile*.[109] At least one of the historians explicitly held that it was a misnomer to call anything other than that which was *honestum* expedient.[110] The *Historia Anglorum* closes with a short but revelatory poem that speaks to what that momentous synthesis of agency and wisdom had brought about:

> The king has died, but England, although without a king, is not without peace. You, Henry, foremost on earth, work this miracle. Not yet king, not yet present, you achieve

[103] *HA*, 764-5. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 73-4.
[104] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 72-3.
[105] *HA*, 764-5 [Et quia preuiderat Deus quod puero suo terram sine sanguinis effusione contraderet]. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 73.
[106] *HA*, 768-9; 772-5.
[107] *HA*, 774-5.
[108] *HA*, 774-5. Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 77.
[109] See discussion in: Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 230 ff.
[110] Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History*, 65.

> what the king could not when he was present, you who are most worthy to wield the sceptre. How well will you bear the sceptre, who already hold the reins of the kingdom! Not yet do you bear the sceptre, delayed beyond the high seas, but through you dawn has outshone thy splendours! Lo! You come in radiance: your beams as you approach us are steadfast faith, cheerful clemency, careful power, light yoke, fitting punishment, sweet correction, chaste love, steady honour, restrained desire. So with these beams, while you lend beauty to the beauteous sceptre, you adorn the crown more than the crown adorns you.
>
> England, long numbed by mortal chill, now you grow warm, revived by the heat of a new sun. You raise the country's bowed head, and with tears of sorrow wiped away, you weep for joy. With tears you utter these words to your foster child: 'You are spirit, I am flesh: now as you enter I am restored to life'.[111]

The duke's example shone forth, even in his physical absence - a detail that testifies to Henry's comfort with the concept of ethical imitation. Ethical imitation must have been considered necessary for the communal instillation of a perfectly happy life. Otherwise, subjects' ongoing sensory frailties, and recourse to faculties of memory that had been formed in the lapsarian paradigm, might leave them incapable of perceiving and processing the appropriate ordering of their behaviour. That would remain the case even if their leader was able to minimise or prevent exposure to fortune's reverses for some period of time. Admitting ethical imitation, the leader who wielded agency could be called to set exemplary courses of action, manifesting virtuous traits such as those that Henry attributed to the duke. As the earlier discussion showed, an example as bright as the duke's conduct could not have been achieved without his possession of the appropriate agency, and it follows that his synthesis of appropriate actions involved the following stages: first, the correction and 'completion' of memory, perhaps in part through consultation of histories like *Historia Anglorum*. In the momentary present, he would have benefited from the non-contingent and hence definitive cognisance of pertinent information. This non-contingent prudence would also have abetted his capacity to construct an accurate and thus non-contingent rendering of the pertinent future (albeit one that was itself contingent on agency's continuance). At last, external advantages, encapsulated in the greatest of all such worldly goods, the 'beauteous sceptre' and 'the crown', are subordinated to virtue, as virtue's living embodiment outshines and supersedes them.[112] The sceptre, the crown, and indeed the world, were not to be loathed or held in contempt, but rather understood for what they were – means for the ascent to higher moral and hence spiritual goods. At last, they were.

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[111] *HA*, 776-7 [ Rex obiit, nec rege carens caret Anglia pace. | Hec Henrice creas miracula, primus in orbe. | Rex nondum, presens nondum, tamen efficis illud | Quod rex non potuit presens, dignissime sceptris. | Quam bene sceptra geres, qui regni flectis habenas! | Nondum sceptra gerens, dum trans maris alta moraris, | Per te, sed sine te, fruitur tamen Anglia pace. | Hec aurora tuos precessit, Phebe, nitores. | Ecce uenis radians, radii sunt aduenientis | Certa fides, hilaris clementia, cauta potestas, | leue iugum, uindicta decens, correctio dulcis, | Castus amor, libratus honor, frenata uoluptas. | His igitur radiis, dum sceptra decora decoras, | Tu diadema magis quam te diadema perornat. | Anglia letali iamdudum frigore torpens, | Nunc solis feruore noui rediuiua calescens, | Erigis impressum terre caput, et uacuatis | Mesticie lacrimis, pre leticia lacrimaris. | Cum lacrimis hec uerba tuo profundis alumpno: | 'Spiritus es, caro sum, te nunc intrante reuixi'].
[112] *HA*, 776-7 [sceptra] [diadema].

Reference to England's 'mortal chill' in the closing lines of the poem are superficially a reference to the torrid vicissitudes of Stephen's reign[113]. However, it is worth remembering again that Henry is also making a bigger point. Recall Augustine's assertion that this life was not worthy of the name, and that only those saved at the Last Judgement would experience 'life', after the resurrection. On their highest register, these lines refer to the Last Judgement and ultimate resurrection, when the saved shall attain the only life worthy of the name life. This is the achievement credited to Duke Henry – he has not merely revived England in a political sense after a period of war but has, rather, brought about England's ultimate salvation, and fulfilled the destiny of scripture. The reward that scripture had promised had been borne out, and indeed there is no reason to imagine that Henry could not have interpreted eschatological scripture as metaphor for what *Duke Henry* had achieved, rather than envisaging the duke's achievement as a mere glimpse of what was more literally to come later. It is plain that Henry did not shirk from conjuring with a Christological characterisation of the duke, a strategy that could not have been adopted lightly.[114] Embedded in England's words to the duke, 'you are spirit, I am flesh: now as you enter I am restored to life', is perhaps the implication that even embodied Christ's second coming. It would not have been intellectually empty to claim that paradise had actually been restored, either: the duke had, with God's prompting and Providential agency, 'solved' the lapsarian challenge described by the model, and so there was ample substance to the assertion that oneness with God and freedom from fortune's vicissitudes had actually been attained. There is also the linear nature of Christian eschatology to consider. By their nature, the second coming and Last Judgement could only occur once, and thereafter their consequences cannot be undone. Presumably, it would have seemed incongruent to invoke such an idea in service of what was conceived of as a 'mere' metaphorical political panegyric. It seems, then, that Henry's suggestion was not that England had been revived *for now*, but rather that paradise had been regained, in perpetuity and *in this life*. Whether it was conceived as a clever piece of political praise literature, or as a euphoric yet sincere response to the perceived restoration of a state of paradise on earth, the *Historia Anglorum*'s final act was, at any rate, underpinned by a coherent set of interlinking ideas that imbued it with much greater rhetorical force than has hitherto been realised.

For Clarke, the *Historia Anglorum*'s closing passages, when taken as a whole, were meant to subvert Lucan's pessimistic and chaotic rendering of a world enveloped in the turmoil of civil conflict.[115] Henry's purpose, Clarke concluded, was to show that God controlled events, not chance and chaos, and that Duke Henry was not Caesar but, in her view, a divinely-sanctioned and messianic anti-Caesar.[116] Yet, she acknowledged the incongruity that disturbed her otherwise-elegant conclusion, remarking that 'the presence of Lucan's powerful rhetoric of civil war threatens to destabilise the text and subvert its confident providential message'.[117] My own earlier study

[113] *HA*, 776-7 [letali ... frigore].
[114] Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon', 78.
[115] Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon', 61-83, especially 80-82.
[116] Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon', 82.
[117] Clarke, 'Crossing the Rubicon', 82.

addressed the discordance Clarke observed, contending that Henry had substantively and intentionally attributed many of Caesar's dark and 'destabilising' traits to the initial portrayal of Duke Henry[118]. Henry had done so to test his audience's comprehension of the message that his work had articulated throughout – namely, that attractive rhetoric and the illusion of glory could pervert the whole nation into shameful deeds, in this case the prosecution of a bloody civil war.[119] When the duke's ambitions are read at face value, it is clear that his course would have propagated the same ruinous, cyclical progression of English history that guided the remainder of the *Historia Anglorum*'s narrative arc. Yet, what had been so remarkable about this occasion, about *this* New Caesar, is that he had recognised that his agency derived, ultimately, from God, and so had realigned his efforts towards virtue and unity under Him.

Having reconnected Henry's passages with their ideological underpinnings, a still-higher and previously unremarked narrative register has come into view. The imagery used to characterise the duke after his reform is messianic and, perhaps, overtly Christological. Henry established a clear analogy between Duke Henry's achievement and the Second Coming of Christ. Given these conclusions, and the contrast of the reformed Duke Henry with the dark Caesarism apparent in his initial characterisation, there is cause to wonder whether Henry might have envisaged that the events he narrated were a/the fulfilment of Daniel 7, that reckoned Christ's Second Coming would be preceded by the emergence and rise to power of the Antichrist. As we have noted, Henry was familiar enough with Daniel 7 to have mentioned its prophecies four times.[120] Henry, following other exegetes, subscribed to the view that the historical Julius Caesar had ushered in the kingdom signified by the fourth beast, Rome, and with it the age that would witness the advent of Antichrist. Recall Jerome's assertion that the Antichrist would be 'one of the human race, in whom Satan will wholly take up his residence in bodily form'.[121] In the eyes of twelfth-century Christians, Lucan's Caesar had been represented as a composite of traits and imagery that bore Satanic connotations. Of course, Julius Caesar was not the Antichrist himself. The horns of the fourth beast were believed to signify kings that would follow Caesar, and it was the eleventh and final horn that signified the Antichrist. Augustine did not believe that the eleventh king of that kingdom would be the Antichrist. Rather, eleven kings bearing some common characteristic would emerge over a longer time, and the final of these would be the Antichrist. Given the time that had elapsed since Julius Caesar and Augustine's day, that was the only possible interpretation. There is no reason to assume that Henry would have interpreted that aspect of the prophecy any differently to Augustine. As a result of all of this, it is tempting to associate the eleven kings that Augustine wrote of with the New Caesars that the histories offered such prominence.[122] Perhaps, then, Duke Henry's initial

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[118] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 69-78.
[119] Forster, 'Fortuna in the historical works of Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon', 69-78.
[120] *HA*, 520-21; 524-5; 528-9.
[121] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem*, 77; ed. Migne, 531 [unum de hominibus, in quo totus satanas habitaturus sit corporaliter].
[122] *DCD*, 945-6. *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. Dombert and Kalb, vol. 2, 463-6.

characterisation alluded to the advent of the Antichrist? He was, after all, cast initially as a dark Caesar - the last of the line of the New Caesars to whom Henry alluded. Daniel 7:8 remarked on Antichrist's boastfulness, and that trait is accentuated in Duke Henry's reply to the desperate and hence impressionable personification of England. If all of this is so, and if Duke Henry was indeed cast as Antichrist, then it completed a profound narrative symmetry that described the fulfilment of Daniel 7's prophecy: from the advent and emergence of Antichrist, to the second coming of Christ, to the passage of the elect to a paradisal state, all manifest through the providentially-sanctioned ethical reform of a single leader. If this were so then, following Daniel 7:11, there would be no more New Caesars, for 'the [fourth] beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire'.[123] England had passed from the age of the fourth beast, the age of Rome, the Caesar, and all of the Caesarean depredations and false hopes that characterised that state and had spawned so much contempt for it, to the age of the promised kingdom of Christ. The *Historia Anglorum* had opened with narration of Julius Caesar's invasions, and it ended with the passing of the age of Caesar. From dilapidation and ungodliness, England had passed, *in this life*, to a state reckoned in the words of Daniel 7:13-14:

> "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man,[a] coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.[124]

[123] Daniel 7:11 [interfecta esset bestia et perisset corpus eius et traditum esset ad conburendum igni].
[124] Daniel 7:13-14 [aspiciebam ergo in uisione noctis et ecce cum nubibus caeli quasi filius hominis ueniebat et usque ad antiquum dierum peruenit et in conspectu eius obtulerunt eum [14] et dedit ei potestatem et honorem et regnum et omnes populi tribus ac linguae ipsi servient potestas eius potestas aeterna quae non auferetur et regnum eius quod non corrumpetur].

*Paradisal eschatology*

Might Henry have wished to convey a sincere belief that the Danieline prophecy had been fulfilled and the state of paradise restored, in the present life? Or, was the *Historia Anglorum*'s finale an attempt to attract eyes and gain influence through hyperbolic and ideologically-hollow political praise? If no further evidence existed to arbitrate between these interpretations, then the most prudent course might have been to err on the side of convention and assume the latter. Yet, earlier in his career, Henry had opined on the future of the world in a tract he penned as an epilogue to an early version of *Historia Anglorum*. Robert Bartlett has remarked on the 'somewhat unusual' nature of the views expressed in therein, which he interpreted as suggesting that Henry harboured 'a more hopeful and positive attitude to the future than the common view of an ageing and decaying world'.[125] Henry's epilogue seems to reveal an eschatology that might have supported the hope that the paradisal state would be restored in this life, and furthermore that edificatory historical writing would be an instrument of that end.

The epilogue opens with a brief tabulation of the regnal year, a reckoning of years that had passed since the creation and the incarnation, and a further reckoning of years since the arrival in England of the Normans, English, and Britons.[126] Henry explains that

> This, then, is the year from which the writer of the *History* wished his age to be reckoned by posterity. But since I gave hope to those starting this book that we might turn back to moral purity, this computation will show what point in time we have reached. Already one millennium has passed since the Lord's incarnation. We are leading our lives, or – to put it more appropriately – we are holding back death, in what is evidently the 135th year of the second millennium.[127]

Here, in expressing his hope that 'we (*nos*)' might turn back to moral purity at some point in future time, Henry refers back to the *Historia Anglorum*'s prologue, and the end that he had stated he held foremost in his mind when turning his pen to history.

> In this work the attentive reader will find what to imitate and what to reject, and if, by God's help, he becomes a better person for this emulation and avoidance, that will be for me the reward I most desire. Truly, it is quite common for history to lead us straight back to moral purity.[128]

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[125] R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings: 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2000), 655

[126] *HA*, 494-5.

[127] *HA*, 494-5 [Hic est igitur annus ille a quo scriptor historie suam uolu,it etatem a sequentibus computari. Quia uero librum ingredientibus nos ad morum puritatem quandoque resilituros promisimus, ex hac etiam computatione quanti simus inspiciatur Post aduentum namque dominicum iam millenarius primus transactus sit. In secundo quidem millenario ut liquet in centesimo tricesimo quinto anno uitam ducimus, uel – quod dignius dicitur – mortem sustinemus].

[128] *HA*, 6-7 [in quo scilicet opere sequenda et fugienda lector diligens dum inuenerit, ex eorum imitatione et euitatione Deo cooperante melioratus, michi fructum afferet exoptabilem. Plerumque etenim ad ipsam morum puritatem iuxta callem directum historia resiliuimus].

In the epilogue, Henry took deliberate care to situate his edificatory efforts and pronouncements of contempt for the world in the context of his own times. The emphasis on temporal qualification was to remind that his enterprise addressed a distinct condition, a transitory state experienced in one moment of time. As he addressed posterity he found cause to allude to Augustine's contention that the *present* life was not fully worthy of the name. He did not do this to characterise everything that followed Eden in the absolute. Rather, he moved to excuse the deficiencies of *his* age against the judgement of a future when, he anticipated, those deficiencies might no longer be present. Indeed, he also took care to emphasise at the beginning of his *De contemptu mundi* that he would only refer to events that he had witnessed himself, i.e. that had taken place in his own time.[129] Further, in both the prologue and epilogue, he referred in the plural to collective moral purity that he evidently believed might be restored at some future time. In the epilogue, there follows an appeal to consider the lot of those who lived and will live at various other times. First, Henry's words ask his audience to ponder those who had lived approximately a millennium before him

> What does it matter whether they were individually noble or ignoble, renowned or unknown, praiseworthy or disreputable, exalted or cast down, wise or foolish? If any of them undertook some labour for the sake of praise and glory, when now no record of him survives any more than of his horse or his ass, why then did the wretch torment his spirit in vain? What did it avail them, who came to this?[130]

In casting the audience's attention back to 135AD, Henry picks another distinct period in history and cautions how little that labour had achieved when directed in service of ephemeral ends. His point is *not* that labour itself is inherently futile, and the words that proceed the quoted material prove as much, for they praise the legendary Lucius of Britain for having converted the whole of Britain to 'faith in Christ'.[131] For this, Henry judged, '[Lucius] is worthy of eternal record'.[132] Lucius' example demonstrates, first, that earthly labours were not all dismissed as contemptible, and second that attaining God was not merely a contemplative process, but was understood to rely on external actions, and the success of those actions, within a contingent world. Success in the face of the monumental challenge posed by the contingent world was to be celebrated, and was worthy, in Henry's words, of 'eternal record'.

Henry's epilogue next addresses those who he hoped would come into possession of his work in the future. First, it speaks to those 'who will be living in the third millennium, around the 135th year', before turning to those 'who will walk with God in the fourth and fifth millennia … if indeed mortal man survives so long'.[133] Henry's belief in a long future is unusual. By contrast,

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[129] *HA*, 584-5.
[130] *HA*, 496-7 [Quilibet eorum siue fuerit nobilis uel ignobilis, clarus uel fama obscurus, laudabilis uel infamis, elatus uel oppresus, sapiens uel indiscretus, quid refert? Si aliquis eorum causa laudis et glorie aliquid laboris presumpserit, cum iam nulla super eo posit esse memoria maior quam super equo uel asello suo, cur in uanum miser animum suum afflixit? Quid ualuerunt qui ad hoc deuenerunt?].
[131] *HA*, 496-7 [fidem Christi].
[132] *HA*, 496-7 [Vnde memoria dignus est eterna].
[133] *HA*, 496-7 [Ad uos igitur iam loquar qui in tercio millenario, circa centesimum tricesimum quintum annum, eritis] [qui quarto uel quinto millenario cum Deo ambulabunt, si generatio mortalium tamdiu protelabitur].

some of Henry's contemporaries believed that they were living through the end days, and that the end of the world was imminent. Orderic Vitalis, for instance, cautioned that

> The time of Antichrist draws near, preceded, as God made known to the blessed Job, by a drying up of miracles and a growing frenzy of vices in those who give themselves up to fleshly lusts. Nevertheless, holy father, I will press on boldly with what I have begun in the name of the Lord…[134]

Orderic, like Henry, strove to edify, but based on his words he doubted whether any new dawn could banish the lengthening shadows of sin that foreboded the end of the world. Henry, by contrast, trusted that ample time yet remained for the sun to rise again, even while he was aware that his views were not widely held and so felt the need to justify them.

> Someone will ask, 'Why do you talk in this way about future millennia when the conclusion of time will come in our own epoch and we are in daily and trembling expectation of the end of the world?' This is my answer. The day on which you die is for you the end of the world. Christ, however, is the conclusion of time, who did not choose the first part of time for His coming, but the last, in which the law and the prophets and their meaning came to an end with the coming of what they signified. But since no one knows the extent of time except the Father of all, what I have written is my opinion, which I derived a long while ago from Herbert [de Losinga], bishop of Norwich, a very learned man. He used to say, 'According to my judgement and what I can conclude by reason, truth will endure much longer than symbol, light than shadow, the thing signified than what signifies it, the time of grace than the time of law. If the symbol and shadow preceding and signalling the grace of Christ stretched, let us say, for 5,000 years, would the light and grace of Christ be so much the greater? We see the folly of the theory of those who thought that after the Lord's Passion the world would last only a thousand years, since Christ will come in the last age … But rather I believe with good cause, on the authority of Jesus Christ, that the truth promised for many ages will endure much longer'. I agreed with the bishop when he said this, and still agree.[135]

An important detail in the above is that Henry did not claim knowledge of the future – he acknowledged that that was known only to God. In the absence of knowledge, Henry turned to authority and reason. It is easy to see the complementarity of the logical deductions he attributed to the first Bishop of Norwich, Herbert de Losinga, with his own bullish view of the potential for moral restoration. In the first instance, the bishop's logic rebutted the interpretations of those of Henry's contemporaries who, like Orderic, crowed that the dilapidated state of the world signalled

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[134] *HE*, vol. 3, 8-9 [Antichristi tempus appropinquat, ante cuius faciem ut dominus beato Iob insinuat; praecedet egestas miraculorum, nimiumque in his qui carnaliter amant se ipsos grassabitur rabies uiciorum. Nunc audacter in nomine Domini prosequar...]

[135] *HA*, 496-9 [Queret autem aliquis: 'Cur de sequentibus millenariis ita loqueris cum in nos fines seculorum deuenerint et mundi terminum (498) terminum (sic) cotidie trementes expectemus?' Ad hoc ego. Dies qua morieris tibi mundi terminus est. Christus autem seculorum finis est, qui non primam seculi partem aduentui suo elegit, sed ultimam, in qua finerentur lex et prophete et significantia ueniente significato. Quia uero de prolixitate temporum nullus, nisi pater omnium, nouit, quod scripsi secundum estimationem meam est, quam ex Herberto Norwicensi episcopo uiro doctissimo iamdudum traxi. Dicebat enim, 'Secundum quod existimo et ex ratione compensare queo, multo amplius durabit ueritas quam figura, lux quam umbra, significatum quam significans, tempus gratie quam legis. Quod si figura et umbra precedentes et presignantes Christi gratiam pene per quinque milia annorum extense sunt, quanto magnis ipsa lux et Christi gratia? Existimationem namque eorum iam frustratam uidemus, qui post passionem Domini mille tantum annis seculum duraturum putauerunt, quia in ultima etate uenerit Christus ... Sec potius ueritatem multis temporibus promissam multo amplius duraturam, prestante Iesu Christo, rationabiliter credo.' Hec dicenti episcopo consentiebam et consentio].

its impending end. In the analogising terminology of Richard Landes, Orderic was more a 'Rooster', Henry more an 'Owl'.[136] For Henry, reason indicated that the end was still remote, and that the worldly turmoil of his age did not constitute an irreversible descent towards the emergence of Antichrist. This would have guarded his position from any charge that a universal restoration contravened the manifest Providential course. Of course, both Orderic and other 'Roosters' still believed in moral edification, and hoped that their moralising efforts might still contribute towards the restoration of souls, communities, and institutions. If this were the extent of Henry's own ambitions, he would not have needed to reply to their views in such categoric fashion. Orderic stated clearly his belief that the human lot would deteriorate and wane until the coming of Antichrist and, presumably, the universal death. Henry's epilogue, and his history at large, were his response to those of his contemporaries who believed that the human lot was trending inexorably downwards, and that only after the universal death and resurrection, the Second Coming of Christ, and the Last Judgement, would the elect walk again in the paradisal state.

Bishop Herbert's logic also harmonised with Henry's ambitions for the world in the sense that it justified how, at a universal level, the greater, light, would supersede the lesser, darkness, and prevail for longer. As discussed above, Henry described England's restoration as a new dawn, whose individual rays conveyed the individual virtues that emanated from Duke Henry's example to her people. Virtue was truth, but few shared in that truth without turning their efforts towards Christ and mirrored examples of the virtue that was His truth. While the wretchedness of the world persisted, the full brilliance of Christ's light was experienced by few. How could light be said to have endured longer than shadow while so many yet lived their lives under the shadow cast by the clouds of sin that yet occluded light's rays? Christ's light could drive out darkness, but only when the free and sinful actions of humanity did not occlude it. Bishop Herbert's logic, then, not only justified that the world would yet persist for a long time, it also legitimised suggestion that a universal restoration reasonably accorded to the Providential plan.

Plainly, Henry's confidence in the world's long future aligned with and complimented his effort to restore moral purity. It remains to ask how Henry might have reconciled his belief that end of the world remained remote, with his later suggestions that the prophecies of Daniel 7 had found their fulfilment during his own lifetime – that Christ had vanquished the Antichrist and humanity had been restored to a state of paradise. Various interpretations are plausible, and none can be proven conclusively. Perhaps the most conventional suggestion would be that the Book X is nothing more than hyperbolic panegyric, and that its invocation of eschatological imagery did not capture the author's ideology, but appealed to a higher register only as a means to accentuate praise and blame. To be sure, Henry was given to hyperbolic eulogy – for instance, he referred in hexameter to his patron, Bishop Alexander of Lincoln, as 'the flower of men', while the obit he

[136] R. Landes, 'On owls, roosters, and apocalyptic time: a historical method for reading a refractory documentation', *Union Theological Seminary Quarterly* (1997), 49-69.

composed for Henry I favourably compared the king with the high pantheon of Roman Gods.[137] It was not uncommon during the twelfth century to label political enemies or theological innovators Antichrists.[138] Yet, while Henry *was* an engaged panegyrist, he repeatedly emphasised that his *greatest* ambition was to facilitate the restoration of moral purity. Articulating the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy, if he did not sincerely believe that light had prevailed once-and-for-all, would surely have served to legitimise moral complacency and the denigration of his edificatory efforts? It seems unlikely that Henry would have been prepared to pay that price in pursuit of fame and political influence, especially so late in his life.

Another possibility is that the finale's ideological argument was sincere, and that its contradiction of the epilogue's argument that the Antichrist was yet remote captures an evolution in Henry's eschatological thought. Plenty of time had elapsed for Henry to have rethought his views - he penned the epilogue to the original version of the *Historia Anglorum* over two decades before he wrote of Duke Henry's reform and accession.[139] Those were the decades of Stephen's tumultuous reign, when events might very plausibly have shaken his earlier convictions. If both of his ideological expressions are taken as sincere, then his earlier view that the advent of Antichrist and Christ's Second Coming were yet remote had been supplanted by a belief that the Danieline prophecy had come to pass in his own lifetime, but in a surprisingly novel way. The paradisal state had been restored in the present life, and the events of the Antichrist's emergence and Christ's Second Coming had been embodied in the actions of one human agent, who had acted through grace to restore the paradisal state in perpetuity. If this is the case then presumably the implication followed that the world might not end at all.

Arguably, though, the most attractive interpretation is that Henry's views did not change, and that he crafted the *Historia Anglorum*'s finale to support the argument of his epilogue and subvert the prevailing eschatology, perhaps because he felt it was being used to excuse others' lethargic attitude to moral improvement. The tale of Duke Henry's reform and its consequences could thus be seen as a pointed rebuke to any who had set their restorative ambitions too low – those who had lamented the world's fading light without having exhausted measures to restore it. To this end, Henry conceded that the Antichrist *had* been imminent after all, as had his defeat and the return of humanity to a paradisal state. Yet, his concession was to emphasise that the Danieline prophecy had in fact referred, all along, to very different circumstances than most expected. It had marked leaders who wielded especial agency, and prophesied that one would be restored, by God's grace and human effort, from a state of corruption that would threaten to extinguish Christ's last light. Accordingly, humanity's 'resurrection' did not refer to Christ's restoration of human corpses after a universal death, but to the rejuvenation of the present life to something that more closely resembled the created state. This was to remind that we all shared responsibility for our free

[137] *HA*, 474-5 [flos ... uiuorum]; 492-3 .
[138] See: B. McGinn, 'Angel Pope and papal Antichrist', *Church History* 47 (1978), 155-73.
[139] *HA*, lxxi.

actions in this life. Also, that Providence worked through humanity, as grace facilitated efforts to assemble, over time, a means to supervene the ceiling of contingency, and empowered the human leader to enact the fruits of those efforts. And so it had come to pass that Antichrist had been vanquished through humanity's active desire to return to Christ's example, aided by grace and the agency that Providence afforded Duke Henry. The human lot had not continued on its supposedly inexorable descent into wretchedness, and contrary to prevailing expectation, neither the universal death nor termination of the world had occurred nor been necessary. In the *Historia Anglorum*'s finale, Henry declares it God's manifest will that the world had been restored, not ended. He claims that God had intervened to prevent the bloodshed that Duke Henry had sought to effect on the field at Malmesbury. Henry's words, that 'God had provided that He would deliver the land to His child without bloodshed…', say much more than is at first apparent.[140] Henry's handling of the *Historia Anglorum*'s climax, and his tacit invocation of the Danieline prophecy, recommend that he chose to reinforce the contrarian view that had stated over twenty years prior, when he had reasoned that the world could and would be returned to the light of Christ *in this life*.

[140] *HA*, 764-5 [preuiderat Deus quod puero suo terram sine sanguinis effusione contraderet].

# CONCLUSION

The revival of the term *fortuna* in historical narratives penned during the twelfth century has given rise to various and often unalike interpretations. It has been my argument that each of the four historians at the heart of this study had their own reasons for having used the term in their works, but also that their works betray a common understanding of what I have termed the 'model' of fortune's operation. I have contended that this model arose out of the historians' analysis of the causes of contingencies – often referred to as reverses of fortune. Following established theological precepts, they recognised that contingency had been introduced into the world as a consequence of sin. Yet, their breakthrough was to discern a connection between specific sins and the specific contingencies/reverses of fortune engendered by them. This breakthrough is plainly evident in the consistency by which sins and contingencies are reported according to *post hoc ergo propter hoc* arrangement in the narratives. This logic is clear in all four historians' work, although it is unmistakably clear and systematic in William of Malmesbury's corpus. The historians went to this effort, in part, to refute those sceptics, newly emboldened by the events of the early-twelfth century, who had cited unforeseen events and unexpected outcomes as justification for questioning whether God cared to justly govern all happenings in the world via his Providence. Modern scholars have not previously recognised the historians' causal logic and so have assumed that attribution of events to *fortuna* was either an appeal to epistemic intractability – that the justice of God's Providence in relation to those events could not be known – or, worse, have imputed to the historians a preponderance towards the very same scepticism that their narratives had been penned to challenge. Contesting those views has been one major focus of this work. Another has been accounting for the interest that the historians showed in the personage of Julius Caesar, the New Caesar characterisation, and by extension the kings and magnates that they characterised as New Caesars. The historians chose to articulate that the New Caesars of their day possessed even more perfectly advantageous fortune than Julius Caesar, to the point that for some time these leaders were effectively immune to contingency. Noting this realisation has enabled a reinterpretation of the maximal ambitions of the historians' ethical didacticism. The historians established that Providence occasionally granted human leaders immunity to setback and so the agency to develop greater heights of prudence, and by extension the other virtues, than has previously been recognised. For Henry of Huntingdon, at least, this aligned human agency with the effecting of a scripturally-foretold restoration of humanity to a paradisal state. In this light, the historians' intention was that their famous and oft-discussed laments on the futility of human endeavour, many in *contemptus mundi* tracts and reflections, would be intensified by their juxtaposition against these restorative ideas. And so, this life is lamentable not because we are resigned to wretchedness

as we await either the end of time or eternal salvation in death, but because it is *not* our lot to passively await salvation from without. Just as we are each responsible for our salvation and, in the case of leaders, the salvation of others, so too are we each responsible for making best use of God's grace in effecting the restoration of this life that the historians were suggesting He had made possible.

I have argued that the preeminent historians of twelfth-century England determined through their observation of historical testimony that each reverse of fortune was engendered by a recent and traceable sin. Absolutely fundamental to their worldview was the unshakable conviction that God disposed all events according to His perfect justice. As such, the historians followed Boethius in adjudging that God sometimes disposed events contrary to human expectation as a means to prompt fallen humanity to reform. It appears that King William II Rufus himself had taken aim at some of these tenets, which he felt encroached upon his royal prerogatives and had emboldened those who were urging him to moderate his course. Growing doubt over the efficacy of the trial by ordeal is but one indication that the king was not alone in his scepticism. It seems more than coincidental, on that score, that two of the major historians who wrote during the early twelfth century set about 'proving' the justice of those events that had seemed to defy moral explanation. Both Orderic Vitalis and William of Malmesbury tell us explicitly that they believed it was worthwhile to learn more about contingency and fortune by means of historical enquiry. Following Augustine's definition of justice, they realised that good and bad fortune alike were punishments for sin: Those who gave to God other than He deserved, i.e. those who did not refer every end to him, deserved to have something other than they deserved (from the perspective of human justice) meted back to them. Once they had discerned that recent sins lay behind all reverses of fortune, they possessed an aetiological 'model' whose uses were many. It demonstrated the folly of the trial by ordeal, for it showed that where human justice worked to punish, divine justice encouraged reform. It also helped the historians to identify which ambiguous actions had constituted sins, and who had been complicit in participating or assenting to them. Unveiling divine justice in this manner raised the prospect of perfecting human ethical guidance, the dissemination of which was another of the historians' primary concerns. For those who had seen even the spiritual life of the cloister disrupted by reverses that had intruded from without, it was patently clear that it was preferable to restore the world to order and save the many than to turn from it with the few.

Meanwhile, the same historians followed their predecessors of a generation earlier in characterising certain leaders as New Caesars. Analogy with Caesar required careful handling, for he was not only remembered for his effectiveness in rule, clemency, and martial prowess, but also for a host of vices and failings. Above all, I have argued, Caesar had been remembered as a leader who effected change - even cosmic change - but posterity greeted his achievements with some ambivalence. Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth rewrote the received traditions of Caesar's invasions of Britain so that they might convey ideological commentaries on Caesar's role,

and by implication William the Conqueror's role, in unifying peoples under God. Although the evidence is not decisive, I have suggested it is likely that Geoffrey penned his passage as a response to Henry's slightly earlier work. Further reflections on the spiritual benefit that came of William the Conqueror's unification of England and Normandy, and of his virtuous leadership, were offered via the allegorical register of narratives detailing the crossing of his invasion flotilla to England, and in even more explicit form in the lesser poetry of the 1070s and 1080s. The reductive causal model shared by the first generation of post-conquest historians, which relied on narration of events conducive to demonstrating that divine favour and divine punishment were meted in direct proportion to virtue and sin, respectively, gave way under the next generation of historians' pens to a greater recognition of the disparity between human expectation and outcome. In the context of the model of fortune's operation, the New Caesar type proved indispensable in articulating that the magnitude and constancy of William Rufus' fortune outdid even Caesar's own famed *fortuna Caesaris*.

The historians castigated William Rufus for having spurned a unique opportunity to use God-given agency to reform himself and his kingdom unimpeded by any adverse contingency. In the process, it appears that they stumbled upon what at least one of their number interpreted as a sign that God had disposed that humanity would restore itself, by His grace, to a paradisal state *in this life*. Yet, just as God permitted the Devil to disrupt human affairs in the lapsarian state, so too He had permitted the empowerment of New Caesars such as William Rufus, whose own sins had engendered contingencies that rended their subjects, even great prelates, from the pursuit of lofty ends. That, in turn, had unravelled communal bonds, and many of his subjects had receded from their highest *telos* as a consequence. We cannot say conclusively that the Satanic Caesar type had been resolved in distinct terms by the time our historians wrote, but by then all of its scriptural, Patristic, and literary precedents were in place and widely known. In any case, the harm that Rufus' instigation of contingency had wrought on his people, his challenge of the Church, and his pitiful demise, spoke of the need to memorialise in ink the damage that his reign had wrought so that the next New Caesar might learn to pursue a more virtuous course.

This does not appear to have been an idle hope. In Robert of Gloucester, William of Malmesbury sketched a leader whose learning had turned him to a virtuous course. By His grace, God had granted him the agency to cultivate virtue in spite of the contingencies that faced him, and through his withdrawal from assent to the sins of others, and the avoidance of sin, he had instilled perfect order for a brief period, before having voluntarily returned to England and again subordinated himself to the command of his sister, the Empress Matilda. The Empress' sins dragged Robert back into what William elsewhere called the 'violence of fortune'.[1] William was left to intimate what might have been had Robert, and not his corruptible sister, been the legitimate heir. The fullest realisation of the ideas that have occupied this study comes in Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*. Henry believed that the final New Caesar that he had lived to see

[1] *GR*, 756-7 [uiolentiam fortunae].

would be the last that the world would ever need. In Duke Henry of Anjou, he saw the battle between the Antichrist and Christ's Second Coming unfold through the young Caesar's ethical reform. This accorded well with Henry's atypically optimistic eschatology, that he relates in some depth earlier in his great work. Henry's allusions establish an analogy not to any transitory worldly achievement but, remarkably, to the eternal salvation that had been promised to the elect after the Second Coming and the Last Judgement. The *Historia Anglorum* told that England had endured five metaphorical plagues, centuries of impotent rule, and the agony of New Caesars who had wasted their restorative potential. In its climax, the work basks in having become a memorialisation of what the ethical historical endeavour had helped to achieve, rather that what it might yet achieve in future – its author leaves the audience with the exultant suggestion that King Henry II had, at last, fulfilled the Prophecy of Daniel, extinguished fortune for good, and restored England's people to a paradisal state.

Each of the historians were individuals with their own perspectives and preoccupations, and each engaged with the range of ideas that we have explored in a slightly different manner and to different degrees. Orderic Vitalis took care to demonstrate that contingency and fortune had disrupted spiritual advancement in a monastic house whose external responsibilities and connections had kept it at the mercy of the worldly turmoil that characterised Norman politics during much of the 1100s and 1110s. Of the four, William of Malmesbury leant the most systematically on the model of fortune's operation, and showed the most consistent attention to the specificities of the individual conduct that lay behind it. On that score, it is in his works that its tacit ethical lessons bear the most force. William shared Orderic's concern for restoring order outside of the cloister – they both sought means to resolve worldly disorder, because they had learned that it could not be transcended. Henry of Huntingdon and Robert of Lewes began to write slightly later than Orderic and William, and it is possible that, by then, the model of fortune's operation had permeated intellectual culture. Robert of Lewes leant on it to help assert that God's justice was present even in the tumult of Stephen's reign. William Rufus' challenge of the episcopate had probably encouraged Orderic and William to determine the model. Two reigns later we see a bishop using it to try to defend himself and other prelates against secular transgression. Henry of Huntingdon's endeavour needs to be interpreted in the light of his eschatological optimism. He did not need to concern himself so much with proving the model as with peering through its explanatory prism to learn and elucidate God's restorative plan. He closed the *Historia Anglorum* with the silent satisfaction that the historians' efforts had been justified all along.

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